

City of Columbia
Attention: City Council
701 E Broadway
Columbia, MO 65205

**WATER AND LIGHT ADVISORY BOARD
WLAB FY2025 ANNUAL REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL
DECEMBER 12, 2025**

The Water and Light Advisory Board (“Board” or “WLAB”) continues to provide effective guidance, recommendations, and welcomes community input for the operation of the City of Columbia’s (“City”) water and light utilities. The below annual report for the City Water and Light Advisory Board highlights the activities and actions the Board completed in fiscal year 2025 (“FY2025”), encloses the FY 2025 goals, and future goals for FY2026.

Board Members in FY25:

Philip Fracica, Chair
Jennifer Coleman, Vice Chair
Tom Jensen
David Switzer
Gregg Coffin (until June 2025)
Ryan Westwood (July 2025)

In FY2025 the Board accomplished several items based on its goals and continues to provide guidance to City utility Staff (“City Staff”). The below list summarizes the accomplishments and support provided by the Board in FY2025. Each goal and objective outlined for FY2025 has been addressed. The FY2025 goals are attached. In addition, the Board is attaching its FY 2026 proposed goals.

1. RENEWABLE ENERGY

- a. Participated in work sessions with City Council on the TEA renewable energy study.
- b. Worked with Utility Staff to recommend changes to the renewable energy ordinance beyond the 2028 goal and proposed changes to the ordinance.
- c. Provided recommended changes to the renewable energy ordinance.

2. COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

- a. Promoted community use of the web-linked email access to WLAB members and utility staff.
- b. Hosted a public meeting on October 29, 2025.
- c. Attended City Council meetings regarding the proposed FY2025 rate increases for both water and electric rates.
- d. Submitted the FY2024 annual report to City Council and attended the Council meeting to present and answer questions.
- e. Provided a training presentation through TEA on May 6, 2025 discussing MISO market conditions including congestion issues where several members of Council attended.

- f. Reviewed customer survey results.
- g. Responded to several community inquiries (11 total emails).

3. UTILITY RATE METRICS DEVELOPMENT

- a. Developed water rate affordability metrics to be included in the FY2025 water cost of services study.
- b. Reviewed water utility financials and recommended a rate increase for FY2025 to sustain financial viability.
- c. Provided a detailed recommendation to City Council supporting the approval of the 2025 water rate adjustments.

4. IERMP RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. Supported development of a plan to upgrade Hinkson Creek Substation to mitigate flooding and MU transmission access.
- b. Continued support for development of a transmission plan for the southern part of the utility system.

The Board appreciates the City Staff for their support in providing requested information in response to Board member inquiries. City Staff commit their time to coordinate, communicate, and facilitate Board meetings.

FY24 WLAB GOALS

Previously Provided to City Council in the January 2025 Submittal

- 1) Continue to provide guidance for expanding the utility's renewable energy portfolio to achieve the community's renewable energy ordinance goals.
 - a. Support implementation of City's updated Community Solar Program
 - b. Participate in work sessions with City Council on the TEA renewable energy study
 - c. Work with Utility Staff to recommend changes to the current renewable energy ordinance past 2028 goal
- 2) Seek solutions to further improve the utility's successful demand side management (DSM) and efficiency programs for the community.
 - a. Review and encourage utilization of Federal and State funding opportunities for the City utility and their customers
 - b. Encourage implementation of an EV charging program or rate structure to encourage charging at off peak periods.
 - c. Support the AMI implementation Study
- 3) Continue to Improve WLAB communication with the community and Council, specifically:
 - a. Promote the communities use of the web linked email access to WLAB members and utility staff
 - b. Host a public meeting to seek community input on current water and electric utility issues.
 - c. Submit a FY23 annual report to City Council by the end of calendar year 2023.
- 4) Develop a set of utility rate metrics to evaluate rate affordability and encourage their use them to evaluate future utility rate changes.
- 5) Support the utility staff on the implementation of recommendations from IERMP for necessary distribution and transmission system improvements and expansions.
 - a. Support capital projects to expand the capacity and redundancy of the Perche Creek and Bolstad Substations.
 - b. Support development of a plan to upgrade Hinkson Creek Substation to avoid flooding impact and allow MU to upgrade its requested transmission access.
 - c. Continue to support the development of a transmission plan as recommended by the IERMP recommendations.
- 6) Support staff to conduct a capacity study in FY 25 to be prepared for changing market conditions with MISO.

FY 2026 WLAB GOALS

1. SUSTAINABILITY

- a. Review and provide recommendations on the City's irrigation ordinance
- b. Continue support for energy efficiency programs

2. COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION

- a. Continue board outreach to the community and Council
- b. Plan and attend additional educational trainings for Board members, City Staff, and Council members
- c. Plan one community outreach meeting
- d. Review and determine a process for addressing emailed public comments
- e. Create process for public engagement when the board is voting on given agenda topic (allow for three minutes of public comments prior to the board voting)

3. UTILITY RATE METRICS

- a. Continue review of the power cost adjustment policy to determine if amendments are required
- b. Provide recommendations regarding an annual water rate adjustment based on consultant's water cost of service study completed in 2025
- c. Review affordability metrics for electric utility

4. INTEGRATED RESOURCE PLANNING

- a. Review the City's Integrated Resource Plan ("IRP")
- b. Provided recommendations based on the IRP

5. CAPITAL PROJECT REVIEW

- a. Continue review of capital projects to support justifications for continued investment to ensure the utility provides reliable, safe, and adequate service.
- b. Participate in transmission line planning process