



City Light Review Panel Meeting Meeting Minutes

Date of Meeting: Feb 18, 2026 | 9:00 – 11:00 AM – Approved
Meeting held in SMT 3204 and via Microsoft Teams

MEETING ATTENDANCE					
Review Panel Members:					
Bruce Flory		Kerry Meade	x	Oksana Savolyuk	
Cristina Gina Sima	x	Leo Lam	x	Ryan Monson	x
Joel Paisner		Louis Ernst	x	Toyin Olowu	x
City Light:					
Craig Smith (Int. GM/CEO)	x	Joe Chiappa	x	Julie Ryan - RP Facilitator	x
Angela Bertrand	x	Jennifer Finnigan	x	Leigh Barreca	x
Andrew Strong	x	Joe Fernandi	x	Maura Brueger	x
Bridget Molina	x	Joe Chiappa	x	Siobhan Doherty	x
Other Attendees:					
Julien Loh (PSE)	x	Christie Parker (CBO)	x	Eric McConaghy	x

Welcome and Introductions. The meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m.

Public Comment. There was no public comment.

Standing Items:

Chair’s Report. Leo Lam welcomed everyone and opened the meeting. He shared that a letter had been sent to the Mayor’s Office and a response was received. The reply was respectful in tone and addressed many of the concerns and points raised in the original letter.

Review Agenda. Julie Ryan reviewed the agenda.

Approval of January 21, 2026, Meeting Minutes. Minutes were approved.

Communications to Panel. There was no communication to the Panel.

General Manager’s Update. Interim GM Craig Smith presented.

1. 2026 Legislative Priorities

Washington’s 2026 state legislative session began January 12. While it’s a “short” session, lasting 60



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days, the policy decisions made over the next two months could have long-lasting impacts on how public utilities serve customers. Seattle City Light is not advancing new legislative proposals this year. Instead, our focus this session is to **protect customers, preserve local utility decision-making, and support practical clean energy solutions**. This includes:

- Protecting reliability and resource adequacy
- Ensuring wildfire policy works for public utilities and ratepayers
- Supporting smart, streamlined transmission solutions
- Approaching distributed energy and community solar thoughtfully
- Maintaining workable environmental review and permitting processes
- Preparing for rapid load growth, including data centers

2. **Unplanned Outage Notifications**

On January 21, we launched our new unplanned outage notifications system that allows us to proactively communicate with customers via text or email when their home or business experiences an outage. During this pilot phase, City Light will send notifications for outages affecting 500 customers or fewer (96.5% of all outages). We will increase this threshold as the pilot progresses, and phase 2 will include text messages with estimated time of restoration (ETOR). Customers in the underground network distribution areas will not receive notifications.

By notifying our customers, they know when their homes or businesses are affected by outages, we enable them to make informed decisions, whether it's working from another location, picking up dinner on the way home, or staying with friends and family. This helps us build trust and transparency, reduce customer frustration during outages, and improve overall customer experience and satisfaction. To support this transition, the outage map will temporarily display a message informing customers about the new feature. We've also published a webpage and Powerlines blog post with instructions on how customers can update their preferences, opt-in, or opt-out of the notifications.

Customers who have provided their email address and/or mobile number will automatically receive a notification when their power goes out. The message will include a link to the City Light outage map, where they can track the estimated time of restoration (ETOR). Customers will receive a second notification once power has been restored. New customers will automatically be enrolled in these notifications upon starting service.

3. **Maura Brueger appointed to National Hydropower Association Board**

Maura Brueger, Director of Government and Legislative Affairs, has been appointed to the National Hydropower Association (NHA) 2026 Board of Directors. The NHA is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting the growth of clean, renewable hydropower and marine energy.

Maura is one of 21 forward-thinking leaders on the board and will represent Seattle City Light while working to preserve and expand hydropower across the nation. With hydropower accounting for



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nearly 80% of our generation, her appointment ensures a strong voice for public power and the federal hydropower system.

4. NW Regional Strategy Coordination

Last week (2/5), Seattle City Light hosted the first quarterly regional strategy coordination meeting, bringing together representatives from Puget Sound Energy, Snohomish PUD, Tacoma Utilities, and Eugene Water and Electric Board. During the session, we shared insights on our 10-Year Strategic Roadmap process and engaged in a robust discussion around differences in planning approaches, staffing structures, and opportunities for future collaboration. The group identified areas for improvement and ways to learn from each other's practices. Looking ahead, we plan to meet quarterly, with additional invitations to be extended to BPA, Portland General Electric, and Chelan PUD to broaden participation in upcoming sessions.

5. City Light Named 2025 Business and Residential Customer Champion

At Seattle City Light, we strive to provide our customers with exceptional service and support. We are honored to be named a [2025 Residential Customer Champion](#) and, for the second year in a row, a [2025 Business Customer Champion](#). These honors come from the Cogent Syndicated 2025 Utility Trusted Brand & Customer Engagement™: Residential and Business studies conducted by Escalent. Escalent studies 85 of the largest gas, electric, and combination utilities in the country to focus on how utilities connect with and engage business customers of all sizes.

City Light was one of 12 utilities named Business Customer Champion and one of 36 utilities named Residential Customer Champion for our ability to build and sustain highly engaged residential customer relationships. Receiving this recognition highlights our efforts to build and maintain relationships in our service area and to provide reliable support the region's needs.

6. City Light crew responds to rollover accident

Sometimes City Light crews' work goes beyond the job description. On January 22, Journeyworker-in-Charge Steven Best, Journeyworker Joe Seidler, and Lineworker Apprentice Dorian Williams were on their way to assist with a residential fire when they encountered a different kind of emergency.

While traveling south on Highway 509, they witnessed a car roll multiple times across the roadway before the driver was ejected. Without hesitation, the crew jumped into action. Joe, who was driving, immediately pulled over and called 911. Steven and another motorist worked to keep the injured driver calm and conscious while Joe and Dorian cleared debris from the roadway for emergency responders. The original call for the housefire was quickly reassigned to another team, allowing them to focus on helping the driver until medics arrived.

Our crews are often among the first on the scene in emergencies, whether responding to car-pole incidents, downed wires, or house fires. Their quick thinking and dedication to public safety make a real difference in critical moments. By securing the scene and providing immediate aid, this crew not only helped a driver in need but also made it safer for the first responders who arrived after them.



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Skagit Relicensing - An additional update was provided on the Skagit Hydro Project relicensing. After eight years of work to secure a settlement agreement with joint parties, significant progress has been made, and an announcement is anticipated soon.

Comments from the RP members: The panel acknowledged the crew's actions to assist the driver in the rollover accident and expressed appreciation for their professionalism and service.

Q: After the Dakota Street street project issue, City Light committed to notify customers of project impacts. How will that will be implemented systemwide at City Light moving forward?

A: Customers are particularly interested in planned outages and tree impacts. It is a good question and warrants a more coordinated response. We will formalize the approach with the design team and provide an update next month. There is also a need to be more proactive in communicating with and getting in front of the community. Angela will add this topic to next month's agenda.

Demand Side Management Potential Assessment. Joe Fernandi & Jennifer Finnigan presented. Materials are in the packet.

Q: Customer battery storage and behind-the-meter batteries. Why was it not included, and when will it be factored in?

A: We have been building the foundation of the demand response portfolio and are about a year into a demand response strategy and roadmap. The most recent DSM potential assessment did not show behind-the-meter batteries as cost-effective, but that is expected to change over time. An opportunity study is underway to assess the market, costs, and value streams so they can mobilize more quickly in the future. City Light is currently working on a project with Nucor Steel.

Q: Market-based concepts like virtual power plants. How does City Light see those fitting in?

A: We are prioritizing a DERMS (Distributed Energy Resource Management System) platform to enable connection with distributed assets and support programs such as a virtual power plant in partnership with customers. The near-term approach is a "DERMS Edge" model using software providers to connect to different asset classes. Longer term, the goal is to move toward utility-scale DERMS with direct utility control. It's similar as "walk, jog, run" progression and noted as a newer space for the Northwest. We anticipate a future program with behind-the-meter batteries, water heaters, and other devices.

Q: Electrification. What is City Light's perspective and what can City Light fund?

A: City Light supports electrification via education, technical support, and energy efficiency programs. State law does not allow electric utilities to directly fund fuel switching, but City Light can fund the difference between high and low efficiency options, such as high- efficiency heat pumps (HB 1185 Washington State Legislature). City Light has partnered with Office of



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Sustainability and Environment to help customers understand requirements and access available incentives.

Q: Does the planning process allow for alternatives to traditional approaches, such as non-wires alternatives?

A: The current integrated resource planning process compares demand to various supply resource options, including DSM. The goal is to not only compare conservation and energy efficiency resources to bulk power options, but to also consider the transmission and distribution costs considered. Work is underway on non-wires alternatives, including studies and coordination with large customers to avoid infrastructure upgrades.

Q: Why is there such a big difference between the 2026–2035 and 2036–2045 customer-side resource additions?

A: Conservation is higher in the near term largely due to HB 1185, which bans mercury light bulbs beginning in 2029, so there is a strong push to offer incentives before the law takes effect. For demand response, modeling assumes additional resource options may be available in the outer years, and this is a developing area that may shift in future model iterations.

Q: How does TOU (Time-of-Use) fit, since it shifts demand?

A: Time-of-use rates are part of the demand response portfolio and align with one of the “four S’s,” (shed, shift, shape, and shimmy) used to describe how demand is managed to match supply.

Q: Why is City Light’s achievable economic potential so low?

A: City Light’s energy efficiency potential is under 1% of total load, around 0.8%, compared to many utilities in the 1% to 1.5% range. Hydro is relatively cheap in the Northwest, and City Light has been doing conservation for a long time, so much of the low-hanging fruit has already been captured. Other factors include strict energy codes, rising equipment and labor costs, a high share of commercial real estate, and downtown office vacancies. CETA also impacts City Light differently than some peers, as planning is driven more by load growth than supply-side decarbonization.

Strategic Plan Outline. Angela Bertrand presented. Materials are in the packet.

Q: Is there anything new being presented?

A: The structure is new. The panel has previously seen the focus areas content themes, and outcomes, but this is the first time the panel has seen the elements together in this framework and plan organization.

Q: Is there something to highlight where feedback would be most helpful to minimize cognitive load?

A: It was acknowledged that the document contains a substantial amount of information. Feedback is requested on structure, clarity, and how key priorities are highlighted. Panel members were encouraged to review the packet and email questions in advance to address at the next meeting.



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Q: Is there an executive summary?

A: A letter from Dennis will function as the executive summary and is expected to mirror key priorities.

Revenue Foundations and Draft Rate Path. Carsten Croff presented. Materials are in the packet?

Q: Could you say more about the impact of wages as a portion of the rate increases?

A: Wage growth is assumed at approximately 4–5%, higher than CPI. It was noted that wage growth was underestimated in the last strategic plan. A detailed breakdown of the wage impact on the rate increase will be provided.

Comments: It might help readers understand the big drivers to rate increases if you could put numbers or percentages for each of the Cost Pressures driving rate increases (slide 7 in the presentation).

Q: March 18th and in April, if what is proposed differs from what was presented to the Review Panel, what is the plan?

A: It is not anticipated it will be different. The overall level of spending should already reflect in the rate path. If there are significant changes, it will be timely communicated to the Review Panel.

March Agenda. Rate path, strategic plan, Utility Discount Program Expansion & Redesign, and update on South Dakota Street Project.

Please send feedback on questions on the structure by Feb 27; Please review copy before 3/18 meeting.

Adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 10:47 a.m.

Next meeting: March 18, 2026, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.