FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Belleville’s Former Ameren MGP Site Selected as 2020 ASCE St. Louis Section Project of the Year

Belleville, Ill. – September 24, 2020 – The former Ameren Manufactured Gas Plant (MGP) Site, located near 6th and Main Street in Belleville has been selected for the 2020 ASCE St. Louis Section Project of the Year Award. The project, which was conducted in coordination with the City of Belleville, Ameren, PSC Industrial Outsourcing LP, Kaskaskia Engineering Group, LLC, and Terracon Consultants, Inc., focused on environmental remediation and restoration of the site, which was formerly home to a facility that turned coal into usable gas from the 1860s through the 1920s.

“A significant level of coordination was required between the City of Belleville Engineer and the Belleville Director of the Wastewater Treatment Plant and Sewers to develop approaches for remediation around existing sewer lines,” said Allen Minks, Senior Consultant with Terracon. “PSC and Ameren were also required to work with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers in order to perform work within Richland Creek, and allow for the temporary rerouting of the creek.”

The project site is located between Richland Creek to the west and south, W. Washington St. to the northeast, and S. 6th St. to the east. Field work for the project began in August 2015 and was completed in November 2019.

Remediation of the 4.2-acre site was necessary to clean up coal tar, a by-product that entered the soil and ground water, as a result of the coal refinement process used during that era. That process involved the gasification of coal to produce gases that could be used as fuel for lighting, heating, and cooking. The coal was heated in oxygen-poor ovens that generated gases including hydrogen, methane, carbon monoxide, and ethylene. The coal tar seeped deeply into the earth, resulting in necessary remediation.

“This was a complex project that took major collaboration between the contractors, engineers, and the city,” said Belleville Mayor Mark Eckert. “Some of the challenges they faced included very deep pollution of the tar under the earth which actually required them to reroute the entire creek to access the pollutants, controlling odors and volatile gases since the site is so close to residents and businesses, and the close proximity of the infrastructure to sewer lines, city streets, and overhead electrical lines. We’re so happy this project has come to a close and we look forward to making this space open for the residents to use.”

The city’s plans for the space have not been finalized, but the mayor anticipates it will be used as a recreational area or park, with the history of Belleville as a focus.

To learn more about the City of Belleville, visit www.belleville.net.
The City of Belleville, Illinois, incorporated in 1814, is the St. Clair County seat and the largest city in southern Illinois. With a current population of 44,478 (2010), Belleville is home to the longest contiguous main street in the United States, excellent education and healthcare organizations, and thriving businesses and neighborhoods, including three National Historic Districts. Mayor Mark Eckert runs the municipal government along with elected officials including City Clerk Jennifer Gain Meyer, Treasurer Dean Hardt, and 16 aldermen representing eight city wards. The vision for the City of Belleville is one where all sectors of the community work together to help the city grow and prosper and to become a model for other communities to follow.

Cutlines:
Eckert Boyer: City of Belleville Mayor Mark Eckert is pictured with Kaskaskia Engineering Group Owner Geri Boyer.

Pre: Pictured here is the former City of Belleville’s Street Department building, which was located on the rehabilitated site and demolished in 2011.

Ameren MPG 5: During remediation of the site, a tent was erected to ensure contaminants didn’t get released into the air during the remediation process.

MGP Site 2: Pictured here is the Ameren MGP Site under construction, which required rerouting of the Richland Creek.

###