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Tighe & Bond named Engineering Excellence Awards finalist by ACEC/MA for work at Mt. Tom

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Holyoke, MA Tighe & Bond, Inc. has been recognized by the American Council of Engineering Companies of Massachusetts (ACEC/MA) as a 2020 Engineering Excellence Award Finalist (Gold Award). Tighe & Bond, in conjunction with a team of subconsultants and property owner ENGIE North America, transformed the site of the Mt. Tom coal-fired power plant into the state's largest community solar and energy storage facility.

In 2014, the Mt. Tom coal-fired power plant stopped operations, and ENGIE North America began the task of decommissioning and closing the power plant site. This undertaking involved demolition of the coal-fired plant and remediation of many areas of the property. A portion of the site was also used for renewable energy generation/energy storage to benefit the region and the city.

Having provided a range of engineering and environmental services for the 200-acre property of Mt. Tom since 1969, Tighe & Bond played a pivotal role in the transformation of the property. The project team aided with the decommissioning design of the property and worked to obtain a complex array of environmental and land use permits for the entire project for future industrial/commercial redevelopment.

The Tighe & Bond environmental team developed the remedial design for the power plant and the associated coal ash management on the property. The largest component of the property restoration included risk-based evaluations and various capping strategies to address coal ash that has been deposited over much of the property. The coal ash management strategy was possible due to collaboration with the MassDEP.

The successful coal ash closure approach resulted in preserving and protecting nearby waterways including the Connecticut River and Kennedy Brook, over 50 acres of vegetated forest, and associated rare and endangered species habitat.

For the solar project, the project team provided permit level design and engineering support as well as construction period design for the energy storage system. This project developed a 5.7-megawatt (MW) AC solar project that is the largest community solar project in Massachusetts, and a 3 MW/6

MWh AC battery storage project that is the largest utility-scale energy storage installation in the Commonwealth. This energy storage system provides the city an even greater benefit by storing the energy to be used during peak times to satisfy demand while offsetting utility cost increases for customers and reducing the burden on the electrical distribution system.

The project's early success in an evolving energy market and industry in Massachusetts supports future energy storage projects and bolsters the Commonwealth's goals to become a leader in the renewable energy and energy storage industries. Tighe & Bond and the rest of the project team will be honored at the next Engineering Excellence Awards gala in 2021.

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