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USGBC-Missouri Gateway Names Cara Spencer as Director of the Building Energy Exchange-St. Louis

St. Louis, MO – U.S. Green Building Council – Missouri Gateway Chapter (USGBC-MO Gateway) is excited to announce the hiring of Cara Spencer as the Director of its Building Energy Exchange St. Louis (BE-Ex STL), a regional resource to help building owners, operators, and community members drive greater efficiency in the built environment. More specifically, BE-Ex STL will provide support to the local real estate community and building industry professionals as they work to improve their building's performance and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions in accordance with the Building Energy Performance Standard passed unanimously and signed into law by the City of St. Louis in April 2020.

In the City of St. Louis commercial and residential buildings account for 65% of greenhouse gas emissions (2018 GHG Inventory), which come from the energy used in buildings – both day-to-day operations and during design and construction. Based on analysis of local energy benchmarking data, St. Louis buildings are more inefficient than the national median. This means the opportunity for cost-effective climate action is even greater. "The time to act is now. There is a tremendous opportunity to reduce emissions, save money, create jobs and protect public health by taking steps to make our buildings more efficient," says the City of St. Louis Building Commissioner Frank Oswald.

"Over the past several years, USGBC-MO Gateway has proudly partnered with the City of St. Louis on its energy efficiency and climate protection efforts through stakeholder engagement, policy development and education. We are thrilled to have Cara join our team and help accelerate the important role of high performing buildings in leading regional decarbonization," says Emily Andrews, Executive Director of USGBC-Missouri Gateway.

Spencer earned a B.S. in Mathematics from Truman State University and brings experience from both the regulatory and investment side of development. She was elected to the City of St. Louis Board of Aldermen in 2015 and represents the 20th ward, a role which she will maintain. The 20th ward is an area of South St. Louis City that has seen significant investment during her tenure. Prior to public service, Spencer spent over a decade in the private sector consulting Fortune 500 companies in strategic planning.

"Now is the time to be preparing for climate change and positioning St. Louis as a climate ready city" says Spencer. "Not only will reducing energy consumption help make our air healthier, but it will make St. Louis more competitive and help position our city for growth. Major employers like Google and Amazon join a growing number of small and mid-sized companies in prioritizing cities and spaces that reflect the values of a customer base that increasingly values the environment. I'm excited to work with property owners to make investments that are smart for their bottom line, the future of our city and the planet as a whole."

BE-Ex STL will provide critical hands-on assistance to help building owners meet the City of St. Louis Building Energy Performance Standard while addressing barriers to implementing high performance building strategies in the region. A formal launch of BE-Ex STL is scheduled for early 2022. It will work in partnership with the City of St. Louis, the Institute for Market Transformation (IMT), the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) and Washington University, along with other non-profits, businesses and institutions, including foundational support from Ameren Missouri, the Leon Lowenstein Foundation, Spire and Washington University.

"We look forward to working with Cara in our ongoing efforts to connect building and business owners with strong incentives to reduce energy use and save money," says Tony Lozano, director of energy solutions at Ameren Missouri.

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About U.S. Green Building Council – Missouri Gateway Chapter

USGBC-Missouri Gateway Chapter is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit community of members, advocates, and practitioners that gives voice to our commitment to improve human health, support economies, and protect the environment through green buildings. The Chapter serves the community by educating and advocating for green building principles and practices, and believes that everyone deserves access to green and healthy spaces.

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