

Local Economic Development Expert to Help Communities Across U.S. with GSP Economic Architecture Group

Steve McKnight brings 15 years of development expertise to growing national practice, GSP Consulting Corp.

PITTSBURGH, Pa. – Aug. 8 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – Understanding economic development at the municipal, county and state levels, and then turning development opportunities into realities is something Steve McKnight knows (and loves) to do. His passion for his work has led to millions of investment dollars and thousands of jobs for a rural Pennsylvania region. And, it's this success that has him poised to do the same for organizations and communities across the country as he becomes the latest member of GSP Consulting's Economic Architecture (EA) group.



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McKnight most recently served as the Director of Corporate Services and Government Affairs for The Altoona Blair County Development Corporation and his history of successes are notable. In seven years, he contributed to more than 175 economic development projects that brought \$600 million to the region while retaining or creating over 3000 jobs. Under his direction the organization formed the I-99 Innovation Corridor; an internship program involving six universities and more than 100 businesses; a regional entrepreneurial development center, and a technology council promoting technology integration within legacy industries.

He expects to take his experience and extensive list of accomplishments and translate it into success for other, similar communities in regions where GSP has operations throughout the country.

"There are many regions that mirror Blair County and are in a similar situation to what Steve found when he started in 2000," said Rich Overmoyer, GSP principal and director of the Economic Architecture practice. "We are excited that someone with his knowledge and track record will be able to help other communities realize success with their economic development efforts like Blair County has."

One of three growing practice areas at the Pittsburgh consulting firm, GSP's Economic Architecture group uses a three phase consulting model to design, build and implement economic development initiatives for communities and

organizations. With experts like practice director Overmoyer who served as a Deputy Secretary in Pennsylvania's Department of Community and Economic Development and Dr. Jerry Paytas who led an economic development think-tank at Carnegie Mellon University, the EA practice is a sought-after authority on cutting-edge economic development trends and strategies.

"Adding Steve to our team is a great win for current and potential clients because we further strengthen our already-incredible stable of talent, and bring yet another perspective to our economic development consulting," company founder Joe Kuklis said. "Working in the trenches of local and county economic development is a tough business and Steve's accomplishments speak volumes on what he will be able to do for other regions."

Prior to his time at the Altoona Blair County Development Corporation, McKnight gained experience in the tourism and association industries as Development Director for Blue Knob Resort Development Company and as Chief Operating Officer for the High Speed Ground Transportation Association respectively.

"I am looking forward to jumping right in with the Economic Architecture group and using what I've learned and achieved in Blair County to help other communities facing the same development, workforce and funding challenges," McKnight commented. "It was so satisfying to see our efforts pay off in Blair County and I can't wait to put those strategies and blueprints to work for other regions that have the potential but not the plan."

Since its launch two years ago, GSP's Economic Architecture practice has become a preferred authority and consulting group within the economic development community. The EA mission is to change the way clients think about and utilize a consultant's work. As a stand-alone, nationally-focused group within GSP, they provide economic development research, strategies and implementation blueprints. Their clients include bioscience and technology organizations, non-profits, local and state governments and other economic development groups. Building on domain expertise in technology-based economic development, the EA practice today includes seasoned professionals from community and regional planning and development. The EA team approaches each project with the goal of providing a strategy and, most importantly, a roadmap that a client can implement successfully.

More information about the Economic Architecture practice at GSP can be found online at www.gspconsulting.com.

About GSP Consulting Corp.

Founded in 2001, GSP Consulting Corp. is a full service consulting firm headquartered in Pittsburgh, Pa. Comprised of three practice areas – Federal and State Government Affairs, Development Services and Economic Architecture, the firm has successfully served hundreds of clients throughout the U.S. Since it's founding, GSP experts have authored revolutionary public policy, designed and launched ground-breaking economic development initiatives, secured hundreds of millions of dollars in funding, and built longstanding relationships and networks at all levels of government. With offices throughout the Mid-Atlantic, Mid-West and Southern United States, their

diverse client portfolio includes technology, manufacturing, life sciences companies, as well as developers, municipalities, economic development agencies and non-profit organizations.

For more information visit www.gspconsulting.com or call 412-765-1180.

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