

SAN ANTONIO BUSINESS JOURNAL

San Antonio EDF adds new business recruitment firepower with former Deloitte negotiator



Image: San Antonio Economic Development Foundation

The San Antonio Economic Development Foundation has named Ashley Gossen vice president of business development.



By W. Scott Bailey – Senior Reporter, San Antonio Business Journal - Oct 20, 2020

After the Covid-19 outbreak and ensuing economic downturn drove the San Antonio Economic Development Foundation to shift its focus to business retention, the organization is now shoring up its recruitment efforts, adding more frontline firepower.

It's tapped a former Deloitte specialist, Ashley Gossen, as its vice president of business development, with a focus on manufacturing. Her hiring is timely as multiple site selection

experts and other economic development leaders believe San Antonio has an opportunity to leverage an expanding auto production cluster into more corporate jobs and headquarters.

“We can take that holistic approach that we’re not just going after the manufacturing. We want the whole thing,” Gossen said. “We should have those conversations. That’s the goal.”

Gossen previously worked in business development for the Texas Economic Development Council and with the Greater San Marcos Partnership. More recently, she was involved in economic development incentives negotiations for Deloitte.

Gossen comes on board as economic, political and even environmental concerns are causing more companies to consider moving. A new report from the Urban Land Institute, for example, indicates that more investors are also pulling out of areas vulnerable to environmental instability.

“Businesses don’t like risks. It’s definitely something we are keeping an eye on,” Gossen said. “They can set up their headquarters here, recruit employees from our talent pool. I definitely believe this region is poised to do very well — on the production side and the corporate side.”

Gossen said her focus will be on companies in California, Illinois and New York especially. She suggested that companies in Georgia and Florida may also be ripe for recruitment.

“It’s where a lot of these headquarters have been for so long,” she said.

San Antonio has complemented its massive Toyota Motor Manufacturing Texas Inc. production plant with the recruitment of Navistar International Corp., which has begun work on a massive truck manufacturing plant on the city’s South Side. Meanwhile, Aisin AW has committed to develop a large parts production plant in Cibolo.

In late July, California-based Tesla Inc. confirmed plans to build a \$1 billion Gigafactory near Austin. Soon after, John Boyd — principal for New Jersey-based The Boyd Company Inc., which specializes in corporate location and relocation services — said San Antonio should set its sights on Tesla’s corporate operations, which could be movable.

“The main trophy now is the Tesla headquarters,” Boyd told me.

Gossen said the San Antonio region has the talent pool to support a broader spectrum of manufacturing jobs, including research and development, technology and corporate administration.

“San Antonio is ready for more production,” Gossen said. “We’re also ready for more than that.”