

Mississippi Development Authority Weekly Report

“Yesterday was truly a historic day for all Mississippians. I am still overwhelmed by the tremendous outpouring of support displayed by a number of individuals responsible for securing this project. From the very beginning of this administration, we have worked to build partnerships. What we have accomplished, working together reflects highly upon you and your dedication to the future of Mississippi. The announcement of the Nissan project is only the beginning of a future filled with hope for a brighter tomorrow for all Mississippians.

I cannot say it enough, thank you. I would especially like to offer thanks for the tremendous support the project received from our leadership beginning at the federal level, onto the state and local levels. Our leadership gave us the advantage. Through leadership from many sectors, across party lines and self-imposed boundaries, we embraced a common goal; to give Mississippi a strategic edge to compete successfully against other sites considered.

I would also like to recognize the outstanding support we received from the private industry sector. The announcement yesterday was the result of a true public-private collaboration among a number of entities. Our plan fuels innovation and a sense of urgency to maximize all resources to meet the needs of businesses and industries.

Our new vision for economic development, the Advantage Mississippi Initiative, is the key to our economic success. This plan serves as our platform, creating the framework for this project and an atmosphere of cooperation, collaboration and consensus building that draws upon Mississippi’s greatest resources – our people.

In closing, let’s maintain the momentum. The selection of Mississippi by Nissan serves as a catalyst for securing additional major corporate entities looking to relocate or expand. No longer will we ask what if? The question now is, what next?”

*J.C. Burns, executive director, Mississippi Development
Authority*

GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE ANNOUNCES 4,000 NEW JOBS COMING TO MISSISSIPPI

Yesterday, Mississippi Governor Ronnie Musgrove and President of Nissan Motor Co., Ltd., Carlos Ghosn, announced plans for Nissan to build a new manufacturing plant in Canton, Mississippi, located in the Metro Jackson area. The announcement comes following months of successful negotiations and planning among Nissan officials, Governor Musgrove, Senator Trent Lott and other officials representing the State of Mississippi.

“We have redefined the State of Mississippi’s approach to economic growth,” said Governor Musgrove. “There is a new force driving economic development in Mississippi. That force is the Advantage Mississippi Initiative.”

“By making dramatic changes in our economic strategy, we made it possible for Mississippi to compete successfully,” said Governor Ronnie Musgrove.

Nissan officials cited among Mississippi’s many qualities: high quality workforce, good site location and infrastructure, a supportive business climate and excellent cooperation and commitment from leaders at the state, local and federal levels. All are important reasons for selecting Mississippi as Nissan’s latest in a series of manufacturing-related moves the automaker is making worldwide.

“This investment is important in expanding the line-up of Nissan-built vehicles in North America and in meeting our objective of building the right products in the right locations,” Mr. Ghosn said.

“Nissan’s decision to locate their new plant in Mississippi is further recognition that we have the quality workforce, workforce training programs and commitment to business growth that it takes to be competitive and successful,” said Governor Musgrove. “We are investing in more jobs, high-paying jobs and a better quality of life for our people.”

“Governor Musgrove and J.C. Burns have demonstrated their commitment to aggressive economic development for Mississippi, and I was delighted to work with them on this project,” said Senator Lott.

Governor Musgrove brought Senator’s Lott’s office, the Mississippi Development Authority and other state and local officials together throughout the planning process to make yesterday’s announcement with Nissan possible. “Together we formed common objectives, and we saw beyond political borders to create opportunity for our people to have a better quality of life right here in Mississippi,” said the Governor.

The new Nissan plant will join existing North American vehicle manufacturing facilities in Smyrna, Tenn., and Aguascalientes and Cuernavaca, Mexico. The Canton, Mississippi plant will boost Nissan's vehicle-making capacity on the continent to more than 1 million units per year.

Construction of the new plant, located 15 miles north of Jackson, is scheduled to begin in the first quarter of 2001. The plant, with a capacity of 250,000 vehicles a year, will produce a full-size pickup truck, a full-size sport utility vehicle and the next generation Nissan minivan. Production of the first vehicle is scheduled to begin in the summer of 2003. Initially, 3,300 people will be employed, with a potential employment level of 4,000 in the future.

"We are proud to welcome Nissan, a leading corporate citizen, to America's State of Promise," said Governor Musgrove. "Mississippians look forward to the job opportunities and the positive economic impact that will be created by Nissan, as well as the support Nissan will provide to state and local community activities."

"We once again find ourselves in the spotlight of the nation and the world as people take notice of the State of Mississippi and all that our people have to offer."

The Mississippi Development Authority Weekly Report is distributed to MDA staff, economic and community development professionals, legislators and other interested parties. Inquiries regarding this publication or information should be submitted to Stephen Martin, Communications Office, telephone 601.359.3555; fax 601.359.3596; email smartin@mississippi.org. Visit us on the World Wide Web at www.mississippi.org.