



Los Angeles Area  
Chamber of Commerce

**TUESDAY | Oct. 4, 2005**

THE BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE:

# What are 1,300 Jobs Worth?



## Coming up at the Chamber

[View all upcoming events on our web calendar.](#)

**THU | Oct. 6**  
Health Care Committee Meeting  
[more info](#)

**THU | Oct. 6**  
VIP Reception  
With *L.A. Times'* Jeff Johnson and Dean Baquet  
[more info](#)

**FRI | Oct. 7**  
Education & Workforce Committee Meeting  
[more info](#)

**FRI | Oct. 7**  
Mastering Media I  
[more info](#)

**FRI | Oct. 7**  
Mobility 21 Coalition Meeting  
[more info](#)

**TUE | Oct. 11**  
Referral Network  
A Growing Companies program sponsored by Wells Fargo  
[more info](#)

**WED | Oct. 12**  
70th Annual Construction Industry Awards  
[more info](#)

**FRI | Oct. 14**  
Mastering Media II: Advanced Communications  
[more info](#)

**TUE | Oct. 18**  
Transportation & Goods Movement Committee Meeting  
[more info](#)

**THU | Oct. 20**  
Environmental Quality Committee Meeting  
[more info](#)

**MON & TUE | Oct. 24 & 25**  
2005 Golf Classic  
[more info](#)

**TUE | Oct. 25**  
Referral Network  
A Growing Companies program sponsored by Wells Fargo  
[more info](#)

**WED & THU | Oct. 26 & 27**  
2005 Cash for College: College and Career Convention  
[more info](#)

**THU | Oct. 27**  
Economic Development & Land Use Committee  
[more info](#)

Last week I wrote about the proposed subsidies for a new downtown convention center hotel that would bring significant economic benefits to Los Angeles. Thankfully the City Council agreed with us and voted to support the project.

This week, I'm repeating a similar theme—with as much at stake.

In 1958, Nissan began marketing its affordable vehicles to post-war, middle-class families in the United States. As demand grew and dealerships spread throughout the nation and Canada, the company chose Southern California to be its North American headquarters. Now, the Los Angeles area is in real danger of losing one of our most prominent businesses on the eve of its 50th anniversary. If we fail to take action, Nissan's Gardena headquarters may become all but a memory.

The headquarters and its 1,300 jobs are on the verge of leaving for Texas or Tennessee. The reason is simple: Nissan needs to cut expenses, and both of those locations are cheaper alternatives to Southern California. We've seen this before when the defense industry began shuttering factories in the early '90s. California became so expensive, and such an unfriendly place to do business, that companies left here in large numbers. From manufacturing plants to bank headquarters, California's corporate graveyard is littered with the tombstones of companies who have left the Golden State for other parts of the country.

According to Nissan, the company has yet to make a final decision. One thing is clear: government will need to offer some incentives to keep the company—and its good paying jobs—here.

There is nothing wrong with that. After all, our economic system rewards competition. Cities across the country compete each day for jobs. We must do the same.

Those who say that incentives are giveaways must understand that if Nissan relocates, we lose everything it contributes to the community. So giving back some economic incentives in return for keeping jobs here is nothing more than sharing in the economic benefits. They are not giveaways.

As the organization charged with attracting and retaining jobs in our region, the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation is all over the problem. We all need to support LAEDC in its efforts, and we need to make sure that Nissan understands that we want them to stay in Gardena. They provide good jobs. They're a good corporate citizen.

The Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce understands that our region's economic well-being is tied to our ability to retain marquee companies, especially those that have been here for decades.

Last year, the City of Los Angeles business tax reform package helped level the playing field in order to attract and retain local businesses. It's now the County's opportunity to do the same.

Keep Nissan in Gardena—and let's make sure their 50th anniversary is celebrated here.

Russell J. Hammer  
President & CEO  
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce

*The Business Perspective* is an award-winning weekly opinion column by Rusty Hammer, President & CEO, LA Area Chamber

## L.A. Business THIS WEEK

View the latest issue of the Chamber's [weekly email newsletter](#). [Contact us](#) to subscribe.

The Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, with more than 1,400 members, is the voice of business in L.A. County. Founded in 1888, the Chamber promotes a prosperous economy and quality of life in the Los Angeles region. For more information, visit [www.lachamber.org](http://www.lachamber.org)

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### TALK BACK TO THE CHAMBER

Please tell us your thoughts on this issue. Include your name, company and email address and your response may appear in next week's *Business Perspective*.

[Submit Response](#)

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