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Nissan announces \$118M expansion

A \$118 million investment to expand its Canton facility was announced by Nissan North America Wednesday as the company prepares to begin construction of commercial vehicles in 2010.

In a press release, Nissan said the Canton plant will build commercial vehicles developed specifically for the North American market.

"The expansion at our Canton plant represents a major step on the way to Nissan's entering the commercial-vehicle market in North America," said Dan Bednarzyk, vice president, Manufacturing - Canton. "We realize this initiative means growth for Nissan in the U.S. and we are proud these important products for the future of our company will be built here in Mississippi."

Gov. Haley R. Barbour lauded the announcement.

"Nissan's decision to proceed with expansion at its Canton plant is a significant and welcome development," Barbour said in a statement. "The company and state are great partners, and I have reserved a Go Zone allocation designed to help with this expansion."

Barbour went on to say the expansion is a testament to the state's workforce and job training.

Nissan began erecting steel for the expansion this weekend and plans to have construction completed late this year.

Changes to the plant include:

- A 14,400 square foot expansion to body assembly shop
- Modification to 43,200 square feet of existing body assembly shop
- A 49,000 square foot expansion to Paint shop
- Modifications to 59,000 square feet of existing Paint shop
- New assembly line added in existing trim & chassis shop

The Canton Plant will start producing a commercial vehicle for the North American market in 2010, in time for the 2011 model year.

Also on Wednesday, Joe Castelli, NNA vice president for commercial vehicles and fleet, introduced the Nissan NV2500 Concept to media and attendees at the National Truck Equipment Association's World Truck Show in Chicago.

The NV2500 Concept provides an original take on commercial vehicle design and offers a preview of Nissan's first entry into the commercial vehicle market in North America.