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Burbank turns into Cinderella

Friendly regulations make once-spurned city inviting

By Brent Hopkins
Staff Writer

BURBANK — No one's laughing at that old Johnny Carson joke about "beautiful downtown Burbank" anymore. The city that for so long was the butt of humor now is the region's most desirable business destination.

Burbank's low-cost utilities, enterprise-friendly regulations, community feel and low taxes for new businesses combine to make the town a prime spot for development, according to industry watchers.

"It's awesome to come to Burbank," said Jack Kyser, chief economist for the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corp.

"What you run into there is that they



Anna Branson is taking a course at Make-Up Designory, a vocational school for cosmeticians that relocated to Burbank in January because of the lower costs of doing business.

Charlotte Schmid-Maybach
Staff Photographer

have very aggressive economic development. It's like one-stop shopping, where you go in and take care of all your needs in one sitting."

This is radically different from the mid-1980s, when Lockheed Corp. closed up shop, shedding 20,000 jobs.

According to Burbank Economic Development Director Susan Georgino, the city then began an aggressive shake-up of its business practices, shifting away from its

reliance upon manufacturing and welcoming in the entertainment industry and more new technology tenants.

For another feather in its cap, according to the recently released Kosmont Cos.' energy study update, Burbank, Glendale and Los Angeles topped the state for their low energy costs.

Larry Kosmont, president and chief

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COMING MONDAY ► Find out why Burbank would make the best downtown for the San Fernando Valley.