



An artist's rendering of the new Owens-Illinois plant in Windsor. Gov. Bill Owens will be on hand today to celebrate the groundbreaking for the \$119 million bottling plant. It is the company's first new facility in more than 20 years.

OWENS-ILLINOIS/
SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

Plant to break ground in Windsor

Governor played key role in wooing facility

By John Rebchook
ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

It's a case of Owens getting Owens.

Today, Gov. Bill Owens will celebrate the groundbreaking of the \$119 million bottling plant to be built by Owens-Illinois in Windsor.

The plant will directly create 150 jobs with an average salary of about \$50,000. It's the biggest economic development plum for northern Colorado in recent memory and one the governor made a priority to win.

OmniTrax and Great Western Railway played a crucial role in winning this economic development prize.

"It's another example of some good economic news for Colorado," Owens said Tuesday after another event, the dedication ceremony for the new J.W. Marriott hotel in Cherry Creek. "And this is one we competed really hard for."

When the Owens-Illinois deal was announced last September, J.J. Johnston, President and CEO of the Northern Economic Development Corp., noted that Wyoming was Colorado's biggest competitor.

"I don't want to crow or name the state, because the governor there is a good friend of mine," Owens said.

The governor added that he thinks the initial jobs at the 545,000-square-foot facility are just the beginning.

"There are going to be many additional spin-off jobs and companies locating there because of Owens-Illinois," he said.

At full capacity, the new facility will manufacture 1 billion bottles annually for Anheuser-Busch's plant in Fort Collins.

Steven McCracken, Chairman, President and CEO of Toledo, Ohio-based Owens-Illinois, said that after about six months of evaluating several locations in northeast Colorado and southeast Wyoming, the Windsor site was chosen because of its proximity to the company's existing customer base, as well as its accessibility to natural gas, electricity and transportation.

"We're bringing a lot of jobs and money to the area which, of course, are highly valued these days," McCracken said in a phone interview. "And, of course, we're long-term investors. We're not a company that will go in and out. We will take our responsibility to the community very seriously. And I anticipate we will be able to hire a top-notch workforce there."

McCracken said the plant will not be the company's largest, but it will be the first new facility it has built in more than 20 years.

"It's going to be the most advanced and high-tech plant in the country," he said.

Owens said he worked very closely with Denver businessman Pat Broe to pull off the deal. OmniTrax,

an affiliate of the Broe Cos., owns the Great Western Railway, which will deliver raw materials such as sand and some soda ash and limestone to the new plant.

"The railroad has the capacity to handle (the new plant) today and a number of other customers of the same size," said Alex Yeros, a Managing Director at the Broe Cos. "At some point in time, if we would need to expand our capacity, we would do so."

