

## **Norwalk Company Receives \$1 Million Dollar Grant** - NEDC Press Release

On Monday, February 8<sup>th</sup>, Governor Ted Strickland came to New Horizons Baking Company in Norwalk, Ohio to announce Ohio Department of Development's Targeting Energy Efficiency grant award recipients. The visit to the New Horizons' facility was a special stop.

Governor Strickland announced that the New Horizons Baking Company's 'Targeting Industry Efficiency' grant application was awarded \$1 million dollars, one of the largest awards received by any Ohio company.

Excitement was in the air as the award and its amount were announced. City of Norwalk Mayor Sue Lesch, many business and community leaders and the Norwalk Economic Development Corporation's Director Ellen Heinz were present for the announcement.

In June, Huron County was the recipient of an Ohio Department of Development Industrial Site Improvement Fund award. It was this project that helped spark the idea of further reinvestment in Norwalk, Ohio by the New Horizons' Baking Company.

"The Industrial Site Improvement Fund and this Targeting Industry Efficiency Grant are perfect examples of how the state of Ohio cares enormously about its current businesses. They have developed programs to help make sure our businesses not only stay in Ohio, but become more competitive as well," added Heinz.

Asked how they achieved this great accomplishment, Mike Porter, Vice President of Sales at New Horizons, was quick to share praise for others. "Our Company had the privilege of applying for two grants in the past year, and we have been blessed each time to receive funds from each of these grants. Although the paperwork requirements are a little tedious and the wait for the award announcement keeps you on the edge of your seat, the process itself is worth the hard work.

We utilized the local resources that are available to any company to obtain these grant dollars. We had tremendous support from the Mayor Sue Lesch, Norwalk City Engineer; Josh Snyder and the person who brought these opportunities to us and assisted in the applications themselves, Ellen Heinz, the Director of the Norwalk Economic Development Corporation. Without the combined efforts of these individuals, these accomplishments would not have been achieved."

Porter added "I would encourage any new or existing companies that are training employees, planning expansions, replacing equipment or desiring to begin a business in Norwalk to utilize the resources that are available to you to obtain local, county, state and federal programs that will assist you in building your future."

This nearly \$4 million dollar project encompasses an 8,800 square foot addition and purchasing new energy efficient equipment. The new equipment that will dramatically increase energy efficiency (estimated at 25%).

The increase in energy savings and productivity from the purchase of their new equipment and the modifications to their existing facility will allow New Horizons to retain and potentially have the ability to grow their business in Ohio in the future. This project will encourage job growth, secure job retention, and ensure a long term presence in the state of Ohio.

This project has stimulated a lot of activity in the area as local suppliers and contractors are currently engaged in this project and are all from the local area and Huron County. "Using local companies in this project was a top priority of New Horizons," noted Heinz.

"New Horizons Baking Company has been an outstanding corporate and community partner for many years. They worked very hard for this grant, and Mike Porter did an exceptional job coordinating and managing their internal processes, producing an excellent application for a very competitive grant," added Heinz.

New Horizons Baking Company is a major supplier of restaurant baked goods. Founded as West Banking Company in 1967, it was renamed New Horizons Baking Company in 1986. This privately owned firm produces more than 2 million buns, English muffins, and other baked goods daily for over 1300 McDonald's restaurants in a seven state area. New Horizons employs 260 people at its plants in Norwalk, Ohio and Fremont, Indiana, and ranked #72 in *Black Enterprise* magazine's Industrial and Service category for 2008.

New Horizons doesn't wait for opportunities to come and find them, they make the opportunities happen. "This award and development project would not have been possible without the enormous financial and personal commitment of Tim Brown and the New Horizons Baking Team. Their contribution of nearly \$3 million dollars, which is in addition to their financial match of the Rail Spur Project last fall, is what made this project a reality." Heinz added "It is their keen entrepreneurial spirit, ingenuity, and excellent business practices that have enabled all of us to be part of this great achievement."

Tim Brown and the New Horizons Baking Team have always been enormous supporters of economic development and our entire community.

Tim Brown, Owner and CEO stated "We believe that we are obligated to strengthen and grow our business each year to assure its longevity. With that goal in mind and given the current economy, we believe we have to shake the bushes to understand what funding opportunities exist. The Norwalk Economic Development Corporation's keen devotion to the manufacturers in Norwalk, combined with the determination to locate which bushes to shake have been invaluable to us. We would encourage all of the manufacturing community both here in Norwalk and across the county to really dig in to find out what resources are out there that can be utilized to improve their businesses."

Brown added "My family and I thank everyone for their support. We commit to you that we will continue to support this community, our employees and our business in an effort to make them all better than they have ever been."