

Columbia County MEGA Industrial Park Wastewater Treatment Plant

BACKGROUND

- Opened for operation in May 2025
- In 2010, Columbia County approved the comprehensive land use amendment and future land use map for the treatment plant.
- Local, state, federal, and private dollars have gone toward its creation as an environmental, economic and industrial asset.
- It's the primary treatment plant for the industrial park, and it'll also support growth and allow for eastside expansion of Lake City.
- This plant could potentially create hundreds, if not thousands, of jobs
- The plant includes an (8) eight-inch sewer main to handle current demands beginning at 120,000 gallons per day.
- The new wastewater treatment plant has a 500,000 gallons per day capacity

ISSUE

- Columbia County approached Lake City to become a financial partner in the ownership and operation of the newly opened facility
- The estimated cost of the plant is \$7.5M

BENEFITS

- Having a financial interest and authority in an existing treatment facility is a tremendous economic development asset
- It can support growth in housing, commercial, and industrial sectors
- Also, it may relieve some shortfalls in the existing City system
- Being a financial partner in this area's development gives the City much more control in the growth of the area to match our Vision and over-all Strategic Plan
- It's also a major factor in any future annexations
- This solidifies our working relationship with other taxing districts which enhances a combined vision for economic development attraction efforts

FINANCING

- There are various options for financing the treatment plant ownership
- Making an initial investment and financing over time
- Phasing in the operational control as the area develops

- Having new developments support the investment with impact and use fees
- Taking over ownership as the area develops

RECOMMENDATION

I'm requesting the Mayor and City Council allow me and my staff to begin discussions with Columbia County regarding the wastewater treatment facility partnership, and come back to the Council at various times throughout the negotiation process with updates and recommendations.