

BUSINESS

CLAY

County may put up \$20 million for wastewater plant for Micron

The money would be repaid by industrial user fees.

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Onondaga County is planning to put up \$20 million to move forward on a critical portion of the Micron Technology semiconductor complex in Clay.

The money would fund the first phase of designing an industrial wastewater plant that would take wastewater from Micron's factories, clean it up and ship some back to Micron to use again.

The county Legislature is considering lending \$20 million to a new government agency, the Onondaga County Water Redevelopment Corp., that was created to build the industrial treatment plant.

The \$20 million would be lent to the new water agency, which would then pay it back with fees from Micron and other industries that would tie into the plant.

No vote has been taken yet by either the legislature or the corporation.

The industrial wastewater plant and the underground lines from Micron's campus could cost \$500 million to build.

The plant would be built on county-owned property on the Oak Orchard Wastewater Treatment Plant site in Clay.

Designing and building the plant is essential for Micron to build up to four huge chipmaking fabrication plants, or fabs. The company plans to build millions of high-speed memory chips each month used in computers, data centers and artificial intelligence.

"We're focused on being able to service a client who's going to be making chips at full-scale production in 2028," County Executive Ryan McMahon said.

The first fab would generate about 6 million gallons a day of wastewater, according to water corporation documents.

The county last year established the water redevelopment agency to oversee the building of the plant. The new water agency, known as a local development corporation, will also borrow money by issuing bonds to build the plant.

The corporation, run largely by county employees who work for McMahon, is asking the legislature for the loan.

The industrial wastewater plant loan request was presented to the legislature's Environmental Protection Committee on Tuesday, even though there was no formal proposal to vote on yet.

"We're just trying to get the discussion started," Timothy Burtis, the Legislature's chairman, told the committee.

The money won't be lent or spent until the county Legislature approves the loan and the water corporation board votes to accept the money, said Robert Durr, county attorney and chief executive officer of the corporation.

There is no date set for either vote. County officials are also working on a separate project to expand the Oak Orchard sewage treatment plant to accommodate Micron and anticipated growth in Clay. That project could also cost \$500 million and is also slated to be done by 2028.