



FILE

Itron officials revealed recently that the company will expand its existing facility in West Union by relocating operations from a plant in Kentucky.

Itron confirmed as \$8M expansion project in Oconee

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WEST UNION — Though it had already confirmed a planned expansion in Oconee County, Itron was officially revealed last week as the company previously referred to as Project Raven when county council discussed the economic development.

Council unanimously passed second reading May 2 of a fee-in-lieu-of-tax agreement and special source credits for the project, which represents a capital investment of not less than \$8 million in Oconee, according to the associated resolution.

"We're grateful for their continued investment in our county," county administrator Scott Moulder said in announcing the company.

The Associated Press reported in November that Itron planned to close its Owenton plant — making natural gas meters, regulators and fittings — within the next two years, leaving more than 400 employees out of work.

Oconee Economic Alliance executive director Richard Blackwell told his board of directors in March that the company

was moving an entire business line from the Kentucky facility.

"And it's a different business line (than the one currently produced at West Union)," he said. "They make smart meters and electricity measuring devices. This new product will be another element to their business."

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The county's incentive package would give the project a fixed tax assessment ratio of 6 percent and a fixed millage for a term of 30 years, according to the agenda item summary for the ordinance.

Itron officials confirmed to The Journal last month that the company is expanding its existing Oconee County facility by relocating operations from a Kentucky plant that reportedly employed more than 400 workers.

"Itron is transitioning gas meter production from Owenton, Ky., to our North American metering center of excellence in West Union, S.C.," the company's vice president of global marketing and public affairs, Sharelynn Moore, said in a statement.