

## **Fortuna plans move to new building**

Chemung IDA to construct facility for gas exploration firm in Airport Corporate Park.

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**BIG FLATS** -- Fortuna Energy, the biggest player in the natural gas exploration business in the Southern Tier, will move to new and larger headquarters in Big Flats.

Fortuna, a Canadian company whose U.S. operations are currently headquartered in a building on Colonial Drive in Big Flats, will relocate to a 32,000-square-foot facility that the Chemung County Industrial Development Agency will build in Airport Corporate Park.

"They've outgrown that space. We've been actively looking for an existing building (for Fortuna) for a couple of years," said George Miner, president of Southern Tier Economic Growth.

"We negotiated a deal. We'll build the building and lease it to them for 10 years. Then they'll have an option to purchase or extend the lease."

The Fortuna headquarters will be between Orthstar and General Revenue Corp. and will be a perfect fit for the corporate park, Miner said.

It will also be a big economic boost for the region, Chemung County Executive Tom Santulli said.

"What's exciting about this project is they've invested millions of dollars in this community already just in gas exploration.

"They are a major player. They like the community very much," Santulli said.

"This is a \$4.5 million project. They will be employing 90 to 100 people, and these are great paying jobs. They are the kind of jobs that every community strives for."

Construction on the new building should begin in August, and Fortuna hopes to move in within a year, said company President Jim O'Driscoll.

Fortuna has 68 employees and that number will swell as the company continues to expand, O'Driscoll said.

The move should prove that Fortuna Energy is committed to this area, he said.

"We feel we are making a commitment for a 10-year lease to begin with, and we've got three five-year options," he said.

"We're coming up to five years operating in the area now, and we think that's an important milestone."