



**Ottawa County
Planning & Grants Department**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**A FAST START TO THE NEW YEAR FOR OTTAWA COUNTY RESIDENTS:
COUNTYWIDE DEPLOYMENT OF HIGH-SPEED WIRELESS BROADBAND NETWORK
COMMENCES**

Ottawa County – Ottawa County and iPCS Wireless Inc., a Midwest-based communications company offering Sprint® products and services, have approved a Partnership Agreement to expand a high-speed wireless broadband network countywide. The Company will utilize an Evolution Data Optimized (EVDO) wireless technology that will provide high-speed, fully-mobile broadband Internet access to approximately 95% of the County's population. Although limited areas of the County may not be able to access the network after the system is fully built-out, the Agreement will result in a broadband system that provides high-speed Internet to many residents in rural areas of Ottawa County who previously had no broadband access.

iPCS Wireless, as an affiliate of Sprint®, currently offers its wireless communications services, including limited EVDO broadband service, in several urbanized areas of Ottawa County and has agreed to invest approximately \$1,000,000 during 2008 to upgrade and expand its EVDO network into the County's rural areas. The deployment and operation of the countywide EVDO broadband network will not require the expenditure of any public funds.

In exchange for enhancing and expanding high-speed wireless broadband service to the County's rural areas, County and local officials, whenever possible, will assist with expediting permitting, zoning approvals, and site assessments that are needed to upgrade and expand the existing wireless network. County and local officials will also promote the unique public/private partnership and availability of the countywide broadband service in those underserved, rural areas.

The EVDO network, once fully expanded, will provide residents and businesses with maximum download speeds of 1.2Mbps and average speeds of 450Kbps, which is up to 21 times faster than dial-up Internet service that is presently available in many rural areas of the County. The EVDO network also has the capability to provide continuous high-speed wireless Internet access, even when traveling at freeway speeds. The network also utilizes a licensed frequency that will not interfere with existing public safety radio networks and has an extensive encryption system that provides customers with a highly-secured network through which to access the Internet. Furthermore, subscribers to the network can access the Internet from any place in the nation where Sprint® provides wireless coverage, including Hawaii.

Because iPCS Wireless is expanding the EVDO network into the County's rural areas without public subsidies, the cost to access the network has been established at a fair-market rate of \$59.99 per month. However, as part of the Agreement with Ottawa County, all residents and business owners who subscribe to the service are guaranteed to receive a maximum instant rebate of \$200 on the cost to purchase a data access card (i.e. 'Aircard') that is plugged into a laptop or desktop computer in order to access the broadband network. Ottawa County subscribers are also eligible to receive an additional 20% instant discount on all accessory broadband equipment, such as external antennas to improve network speeds or, when available, Internet routers that will convert the EVDO signal to WiFi in order to create a home or business 'hotspot'. In order to be guaranteed the instant rebates and additional 20% equipment discount, a customer must have an address in Ottawa County.

All subscribers are also exempt from paying an activation fee. Further, if unsatisfied with the service within 30 days after activation, subscribers will receive a 100% refund of any fees paid for service. Additionally, if an Ottawa County customer subscribes to the service before the countywide system is fully-deployed and is consequently not satisfied with the service and cancels within 30-days of activation, that customer can re-subscribe for service once the network is fully-built and still receive the equipment rebates and discounts.

The expansion of the countywide network will involve upgrades to existing equipment sites, the installation of new wireless equipment, and the construction of new communication towers in the County. Because the upgrades, installations, and new construction are not scheduled to be completed for a minimum of 90 days (e.g. May 2008), some residents and businesses within the proposed coverage area may have to wait several months to access the network. However, as the network is incrementally expanded to the underserved, rural areas of the County, local ‘kick-off’ events will be held to inform residents of the network’s availability in their respective community and to subscribe potential customers to the service.

In addition to attending a local ‘kick-off’ event to subscribe to the service, potential customers may also speak with an iPCS Wireless sales representative at one of 3 local Sprint PCS retail stores (see table below). Subscribers who have questions about their service and/or EVDO equipment can contact a local sales representative or call a toll-free customer support number at 1-888-211-4727. A Tech Support email service (SprintCardHelp@ipcswirelessinc.com) is also available exclusively to Ottawa County residents and business owners as part of the Agreement.

Local iPCS/Sprint PCS Retail Stores

Holland 3259 West Shore Drive #B Holland, MI 49424 616-738-4727	Grandville 4533 Ivanrest SW Suite C Grandville, MI 49418 616-534-0500	Muskegon 5169 Harvey Street #B Muskegon, MI 49444 231-798-6478
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For more information about the countywide broadband initiative, please contact the Ottawa County Planning Department at (616) 738-4852 or by email at plan@co.ottawa.mi.us.

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