



**Ottawa County**  
**Planning & Performance Improvement Department**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**OTTAWA COUNTY BREATHES LIFE INTO BROADBAND DEAD ZONES**

**Ottawa County, Michigan** – Ottawa County is pleased to announce the completion of a wireless broadband network that provides high-speed, fully-mobile Internet access to approximately 95% of the County’s population. Although the wireless signal cannot reach every household in the County, it does provide a broadband option to many residents of Ottawa County who previously had no broadband access. Several residents in rural areas of the County are already taking advantage of the broadband network. Dan Jensen, owner of Jensen Jewelers in Hudsonville, stated, “For years I have only been able to get dial-up Internet at my home in rural Jamestown Township. The countywide wireless network provides me with the high-speed Internet service that I need to manage my business from home.” Dr. Donna Harris-Kober of Grand Haven Township also stated, “I signed-up for the broadband service as soon as it became available at my house – and it has worked great. I have also recommended the service to many of my neighbors who do not have any other options for high-speed Internet.”

The deployment of the broadband network is the result of an innovative business model that did not require the expenditure of 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, assisted with expediting permitting, zoning approvals, and site assessments that were needed to upgrade and expand the existing wireless network. County and local

officials also assisted in identifying the locations of public structures in underserved areas of the County that could be utilized to install the broadband equipment and assisted in marketing the availability of the network in those underserved, rural areas. The broadband network is owned and operated by iPCS Wireless Inc, a Midwest-based communications company offering Sprint® products and services.

As of March 2009, 30 tower sites have been outfitted with an Evolution Data Optimized (EVDO) Mobile Broadband technology. Sprint® is also in the final stages of installing the Mobile Broadband technology on two additional tower sites in the County. One of these sites involves the construction of a new communications tower in Olive Township. The second tower site is located along the lakeshore in Port Sheldon Township. Howard Baumann, Port Sheldon Township Supervisor, stated, “Residents in our Township have been waiting for a company to provide high-speed Internet – many of them for several years. The wireless network is a promising solution that will help to fill-in-the-gaps of broadband access in our community.” The Mobile Broadband service in these two areas is expected to be fully implemented by the end of May 2009.

Officials from Ottawa County stated that efforts are underway to provide the Mobile Broadband service to the remaining 5% of the County’s population. “We are exploring options to continue expanding the wireless network to those rural residents who still do not have access to broadband Internet” stated Paul Sachs, Management Analyst for Ottawa County. “It is important to remember, however, that even after the countywide network is fully built-out there will invariably be small areas within the County that will be unable to access the wireless signal due to difficult terrain or dense foliage.”

The Mobile Broadband network provides maximum download speeds of 1.2Mbps; although the average download speed that will be experienced by most subscribers is 450Kbps, which is nearly 21 times faster than dial-up Internet service. The cost for the broadband service is \$59.99 (per month) for an unlimited use plan. All residents and business owners of Ottawa County that subscribe for 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 in to a laptop or desktop computer. Ottawa County residents will also receive an additional 20% instant discount on optional broadband equipment such as wireless internet routers that convert the Mobile Broadband signal to WiFi in order to create a home or business ‘hotspot’. All Sprint® customers are also exempt from paying a standard \$36 activation fee and will receive a 100% refund of any activation, equipment, and service fees and costs incurred if they are not satisfied with the service within 30 days after activation.

As part of the public/private partnership between Ottawa County and Sprint affiliate, iPCS Wireless Inc., the company will be hosting ‘Broadband Open House’ events in each of the County’s local units of government. Attendees will be able to experience the Mobile Broadband service using desktop and laptop computers, test optional broadband equipment such as signal-strength booster antennas and WiFi “hot spot” routers, and sign-up for service. A schedule of Open House events is provided below:

**April 8, 2009**

Grand Haven Township  
Township Hall (6pm-8pm)

**April 15, 2009**

Allendale Township  
Township Hall (6pm-8pm)

**April 16, 2009**

Zeeland Township  
Township Hall (6pm-8pm)

**April 22, 2009**

Ferrysburg City  
City Hall (6pm-8pm)

**April 23, 2009**

Park Township  
Township Hall (6pm-8pm)

**April 29, 2009**

Coopersville City  
City Hall (6pm-8pm)

**May 6, 2009**

Jamestown Township  
Township Hall (6pm-8pm)

**May 7, 2009**

Zeeland City  
Community Center (6pm-8pm)

**May 13, 2009**

Chester Township  
Township Hall (6pm-8pm)

**May 20, 2009**

Wright Township  
Township Hall (6pm-8pm)

**May 21, 2009**

Hudsonville City  
City Hall (6pm-8pm)

**May 27, 2009**

Blendon Township  
Township Hall (6pm-8pm)

**May 28, 2009**

Olive Township  
Township Hall (6pm-8pm)

**June 3, 2009**

Spring Lake Village  
Village Hall (6pm-8pm)

**June 4, 2009**

Port Sheldon Township  
Township Hall (6pm-8pm)

**June 10, 2009**

Georgetown Township  
Township Hall (6pm-8pm)

**June 17, 2009**

Grand Haven City  
Community Center (6pm-8pm)

**June 18, 2009**

Polkton Township  
Township Hall (6pm-8pm)

**June 24, 2009**

Holland Township  
Township Hall (6pm-8pm)

**July 8, 2009**

Holland City  
City Hall (6pm-8pm)

**July 9, 2009**

Tallmadge Township  
Township Hall (6pm-8pm)

**July 15, 2009**

Crockery Township  
Township Hall (6pm-8pm)

**July 22, 2009**

Robinson Township  
Township Hall (6pm-8pm)

*Pending: Spring Lake Township*

In addition to attending an Open House, potential customers may also speak with a Sprint® sales representative at one of 3 local Sprint PCS retail stores (contact information provided below). Subscribers who have questions about their service and/or wireless broadband 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](mailto:SprintCardHelp@ipcswirelessinc.com)) is also available exclusively to Ottawa County residents and business owners.

**Local Sprint PCS Retail Stores**

**Holland (Next to Starbucks)**  
3259 West Shore Drive  
Holland, MI 49424  
616-738-4727

**Grandville (Entrance to Rivertown Crossings Mall)**  
4533 Ivanrest SW  
Grandville, MI 49418  
616-534-0500

**Muskegon (Across from Meijer)**  
5169 Harvey Street  
Muskegon, MI 49444  
231-798-6478

For more information about the open house events or the countywide wireless broadband initiative in general, please contact the Ottawa County Planning and Performance Improvement Department by phone at (616) 738-4852 or by email at [plan@miottawa.org](mailto:plan@miottawa.org)

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