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NEWS RELEASE

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Olds Institute Moves Forward on Fiber Technology

(OLDS, Alberta – March 6, 2009) “Olds will be the first community in Canada to have fiber based services available to every home,” says Joe Gustafson, Chairman of the Technology Committee of the Olds Institute for Community & Regional Development. His comments followed the signing of an agreement with Fiopt Communication Services Ltd. (FIOPT) of Calgary, Alberta, for the Planning, Engineering and Preparation of the Cost Estimate for the Installation of Conduit and Dark Fiber for the Olds Fiber to the Home (FTTH) Network. The value of the contract is \$235,000 with funds coming from a grant received from the Rural Alberta Development Fund.

The Olds FTTH project will provide a future-proof telecom infrastructure so Olds residents can obtain the latest Small Office/Home Office and entertainment services and the fastest residential and business Internet service in Canada. The network will be designed to accommodate more than one voice, data and entertainment service provider. A study of the US FTTH market found the average homeowner sees FTTH being worth an additional \$4000-\$7000 (US) per home in the future resale value of a home.

“The FIOPT contract will provide us with accurate numbers on the total meters of conduit and fiber required for the network, plus details on the actual number of single family residences, multi family facilities and businesses, both store front and home-based operations,” states Gustafson. “This will allow us to move quickly to obtaining firm quotations for the actual installation work, hopefully commencing later this spring.”

Stirling McLeod, Chairman of the Olds Institute, points out that, “through community consultations, the Olds Institute recognized a key component for Olds to continue to be a vibrant, entrepreneurial community was having access to world class communication technologies, not only in the business place, but in the home as well. Fiber optics is the proven vehicle to provide this level of access. This network will significantly advance a key focus area in the Olds Strategic Sustainability Plan, that being Communications.” McLeod acknowledged the tremendous support and on-going encouragement received from the Government of Alberta, Olds Town Council and the many Olds Institute volunteers in the pursuit of this innovative community initiative.

FIOPT was the successful candidate of the nine firms invited by the Olds Institute’s Technology Committee to submit proposals for this work. FIOPT offered a Project Management approach as

an option to carry out the work, and the committee decided this provided the best opportunity to move this project forward.

“FIOPT is extremely pleased to be working in partnership with the Olds Institute to further develop this project and provide a workable blueprint for moving the deployment of this network forward,” remarks Bryan McIvor, President of FIOPT. “We congratulate the Olds Institute and the Town of Olds in pioneering this municipal based fiber optic network. It is FIOPT’s strong belief that this initiative will pay both economic and social dividends well into the future, setting the town apart from any other rural community in Western Canada.”

The Olds Institute is a public volunteer board mandated by the Town Council to conduct community consultation and provide direction to community and economic development initiatives in Olds. The board membership includes representation from Town Council, Olds College, Olds Agricultural Society, Olds and District Chamber of Commerce, Mountain View County, and Chinook's Edge School Division, plus eight members from the public at-large. Its mission is “to encourage and facilitate community and regional economic growth and well being”.

Additional comments can be obtained from Jim Barbour – Olds Institute Technology Committee at 403 556 6930.

– 30 –

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