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**FOR RELEASE ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2012**

## **12 Minnesota Counties Collaborate on Bold Redesign of Human Services Delivery**

**ROCHESTER, Minnesota; January 24, 2012** – Twelve county human services departments in southeast Minnesota that have spent the last two years exploring how they might innovate to jointly provide services are moving forward to develop an operating plan.

The 12 counties involved in the redesign project are Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Steele, Wabasha, Waseca and Winona. (A fact sheet about the counties is included at the end of this release.) A steering committee, composed of representatives from each county and from the Minnesota Department of Human Services, is leading the project.

Goodhue County Commissioner Ted Siefert is co-chair of the project's steering committee: "Separately, our 12 counties were looking at a future where we would have to provide the same or a greater level of services with fewer dollars. We believe that by collaborating we can deliver the needed higher level of services to residents at a lower cost to taxpayers. This kind of innovation provides a solution that will let us thrive in these new, tough economic times."

The project has chosen [Accenture](#), a global management consulting and technology services company, to develop an operating plan, business case and implementation plan for how the counties can deliver human services cooperatively. In an earlier phase, the project developed a human services redesign [blueprint](#) for delivering higher-quality, consumer-driven human services at a lower cost. The operating plan will build on the general recommendations of the blueprint to clarify details of exactly what structural changes would occur, what service delivery improvements such changes would bring about and what the cost savings would be.

Two representatives of the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) are participating in the project. DHS Commissioner Lucinda Jesson said, "We expect that the demand for human

services in Minnesota is going to increase dramatically in the coming decades. The bold and innovative approach these 12 counties are taking meets that reality head on.”

Accenture, a leader in analyzing how local governments are collaborating across traditional jurisdiction lines to deliver services more efficiently, will develop a recommended operating plan for all 12 counties based on inputs from the counties. The business case will then be prepared to analyze the fiscal benefits of the redesign for each of the counties. Counties will then have time to review the business case and operating plan; those that confirm their willingness to continue will be included in the implementation plan. The process began in December 2011, and Accenture is slated to deliver the final implementation plan in April 2012.

Fillmore County Commissioner Chuck Amunrud, a member of the steering committee, said, “The employees who meet the human services needs of the people of these 12 counties work hard on behalf of all of us. Their focus on continuing a high level of client care into the future, even if it means they must evolve, is laudable. As they investigate what changes they must make to stay effective, they deserve our support as well as our gratitude for tackling these tough issues on our behalf.”

The Saint Paul, MN-based Bush Foundation has provided a grant for both the creation of the [blueprint](http://www.co.olmsted.mn.us/cs/cspublications/Documents/Blueprint3-31-11.pdf) ([www.co.olmsted.mn.us/cs/cspublications/Documents/Blueprint3-31-11.pdf](http://www.co.olmsted.mn.us/cs/cspublications/Documents/Blueprint3-31-11.pdf)) and development of the operating plan, business case and implementation plan. If all or many of the counties proceed with the implementation plan, it is anticipated that the savings generated by the redesign will be sufficient to cover the investment required for implementation. A grant from the Rochester Area Foundation also supported early development of the project.

Bush Foundation CFO Greg Keane said, “The demographic and economic shifts these counties are responding to represent the ‘new normal’ for Minnesota—more services needed with fewer resources. To meet these changes, communities need a new way of working that acknowledges the permanence of this new normal. The courageous leaders of this redesign project are doing bold, innovative work to ensure a vital future for their communities, work other communities will be able to learn from and adapt to address their own tough problems.”

Accenture is a global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company with over 236,000 people serving clients in more than 120 countries. The firm has been a leader

in analyzing how local governments are collaborating across traditional jurisdiction lines to deliver services more efficiently.

A fact sheet on the 12 counties involved in this redesign project is included at the end of this release.

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**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

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## Fact Sheet

### About the counties' human services operations

County	2010 population	2012 annual budget	Local tax levy	Employees
Dodge	20,087	\$4,602,264	\$2,403,415	34
Fillmore	20,866	\$3,673,344	\$1,154,266	25
Freeborn	31,255	\$10,600,000	\$5,300,000	82
Goodhue	46,183	\$10,213,053	\$3,909,980	69
Houston	19,027	\$4,401,480	\$1,209,970	31
Mower	39,163	\$8,455,043	\$2,858,775	59
Olmsted	144,248	\$54,701,663	\$27,818,021	337
Rice	64,142	\$10,550,366	\$3,929,695	88
Steele	36,576	\$8,082,583	\$2,834,447	61
Waseca	19,136	\$4,397,166	\$1,048,409	26
Wabasha	21,676	\$4,761,151	\$2,133,579	34
Winona	51,461	\$10,002,819	\$2,963,047	74

### Methodology/process

Accenture will develop a recommended operating plan for all 12 counties based on inputs from the counties. The business case will then be prepared to analyze the fiscal benefits of the redesign for each of the counties. Counties will then have time to review the business case and operating plan; those that confirm their willingness to continue will be included in the implementation plan. The process began in December 2011, and Accenture is slated to deliver the final implementation plan in April 2012.

### Steering Committee Members

Chuck Amunrud, Commissioner, Fillmore County  
 Laura Elvebak, Administrator, Waseca County  
 Paul Fleissner, Director of Community Services, Olmsted County  
 Charity Floen, Director of Human Services, Steele County  
 Jane Wilcox Hardwick, Director of Human Services, Dodge County  
 Duane Hebert, Administrator, Winona County  
 Greg Keane, CFO, Bush Foundation  
 John Kluever, Administrator, Freeborn County (Steering Committee Co-Chair)  
 Kate Lerner, Director of County Relations, Minnesota Department of Human Services  
 Jack Miller, Commissioner, Houston County  
 Craig Oscarson, Coordinator, Mower County  
 Ted Seifert, Commissioner, Goodhue County (Steering Committee Co-Chair)  
 Mark Shaw, Director of Social Services, Rice County  
 Terry Smith, Director of Social Services, Wabasha County  
 Erin Sullivan Sutton, Director of the Division of Child Safety and Permanency, Minnesota Department of Human Services  
 Skinner, Lynn CREST Project Facilitator