

Urban Task Force
Organizational Meeting– Tuesday Aug. 25th

Discussion Item – What Makes Urban Extension Different

- Growing faster in population and diversity – how do we staff with more culturally competent faculty
- Newly emerging metropolitan areas must be identified – these demographics will be different
- Extension needs to assume the role of integrating immigrants into neighborhoods and the general community
- Must ramp up Social Marketing efforts
- Stronger ties to decision makers, legislators must be fostered – size = greater isolation
- Workloads exceed capabilities - agents must be counseled
- Collaborations and partnerships are everything
- We need to take the lead on outreach with other non-land grants
- State level legislative powers need to acknowledge urban Extension
- Urban issues are complex
 - Climate Change
 - Carbon Credits/Trading/Footprints
 - Sustainability
 - Urban BMPs
- Are we hiring the “right” people and will they want to work for us – subject matter often changes (sociology, psychology, etc.)
 - Utilize internships to train for new paradigm
- Does Extension need to change to accommodate the urban agent?
- Stronger techniques and tricks needed to reach urban legislators

- Silos between subject matter areas need to be broken down
- A Master Volunteer program needs to be begun and coordinated by an duly trained agent
- Need to be sensitive to the strata of urban audiences (Urban varies among states from 80K to > million)
- How do we leverage the visibility of urban once gained?
- Staff development might approach Peace Corps model – sending teams into disparate communities to support basic needs, not just preaching to the usual suspects
- Communication (like always) is the key
- Resurrect the Urban Agent Tour through support of Administration to tour and learn from others

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE URBAN TASK FORCE INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING;

1. Strengthen task force membership by including two representatives from each PLN committee;
2. Discontinue urban tour & replace it with a one day train-the-trainer workshop the day before or the day immediately following the PLN meeting; The one day training is for specialists, administrators, administrative interns, middle managers & urban administrators. Content will be divided into two topics selected from;
 - salary structure, staffing models, & staff selection based on desired qualifications & audience diversity
 - urban staff orientation & training using the Peace Corps/Americorps training model
 - communication strategies to reach the general public, potential collaborators, local & state decision makers
 - integrated programming among program areas
 - volunteer development, master volunteer model, & volunteer management and-program development & impact reporting.
3. Conduct quarterly computer face-to-face conferences, develop & maintain a wiki page, & invitee North Central Region & others to participate & partner in the development of training & support materials for urban staff. Explore multi-state efforts to strengthen urban staff development.