

Successful Urban Program: Building from the Traditional Base



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Why a new model?

- Extension is becoming invisible in urban counties
- Extension is not the only game in town
- Metropolitan governments hiring more employees, many with advanced degrees

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Why a new model?

- Elected officials are working by initiative creating new programs that they can take credit for
- Opportunities for expanding Extension programming and funding are greater in an urban area

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What is the model?

**“Building on Strengthens of
Extension and the University”**

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What is the model?

“Building on Strengthens of Extension and the University”

4 Pillars:

1. Building projects around community issues
2. Building partnerships
3. Building the infrastructure in the county office
4. Building relationships with campus faculty and Centers

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Build on Your Extension Base

- Agriculture - move into food systems (hubs, farmers markets, urban farming)
- Master Gardeners – focus on community issues such as hunger and water quality

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Build on Your Extension Base

- Youth development – integrate STEM, leadership and earn/learn projects. Focus on reaching into underserved communities.
- Nutrition education – build from the base of Supplemental Nutrition programming for families into community health initiatives.

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Build on Your Extension Base

- Forestry/ Natural Resources – build on the base to help local governments meet their obligations under the Clean Water Act, carbon reduction, and other environmental regulations
- Community Development – focus on economic development initiatives

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Build on Your Extension Base

- Volunteers – build from your volunteer base; train and engage your volunteers in new initiatives focused on community issues; address issues of younger people

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Build upon your University Base

- Research is part of our Land Grant mission – conduct applied research projects and tie university research programs into your community
- Use research abilities to differentiate Extension from other organizations in the community

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Build upon your University Base

- Connect your programs to academic teaching programs and their students
- Include applied research in job descriptions and hire appropriately

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Build Partnerships

(rather than Compete)

- Keeps competitors close
- Allows organizations to focus through their strengths
- Demonstrates to elected officials, organizations, funders and the public that Extension is a team player

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Build Partnerships (rather than Compete)

- Build or tie into regional programming – if an issue is region wide, demonstrate Extension's abilities to cross jurisdiction boundaries

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Diversify Program Funding Base

- Develop funding relationships with county departments, city governments, special districts and NGOs
- Fees and fees-for-service
- Develop the ability to accept donations to support programs

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Diversify Program Funding Base

- Develop/fund county office infrastructure management to support a more diverse funding base
- In addition to the University, use county government and other local organizations to funnel grant contracts to the Extension office

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How does the model work?

- The County Extension Director works at the community leader level rather than the program level
 - Watches for trends and opportunities
 - Community issues
 - Programming opportunities
 - Funding sources

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How does the model work?

- Program teams in place willing to follow-up on new opportunities
- County office infrastructure supports local fund development, contract management and personnel management

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How does the model work?

- Infrastructure barriers are reduced by selecting the appropriate institution through which to run a contract.
 - Understanding policies, procedures and capabilities of the University, county and program partners

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Additional strategies

- Hire strategic thinkers.
- Never lay-off support staff
- Local overhead needs to be figured into every grant even those coming through the University.

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Outcomes:

- Stayed at full staffing through the Great Recession
- Local funding for Snohomish County Extension exceeds \$1,000,000
- Number of contracts and fee programs exceeds 30.
- WSU Extension is visible in the community and requested partner

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Questions?

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