

Urban Extension Introductory Guide

This Urban Extension Introductory Guide provides easy access to resources to improve awareness of urban Extension context for all university Extension personnel, colleagues, volunteers, advocates, and partners. Access as many or as few of these resources as you would like. Focusing on urban is not intended to minimize the important work and impact in our rural and suburban communities, but to better understand the context and strategy relevant in metropolitan areas.

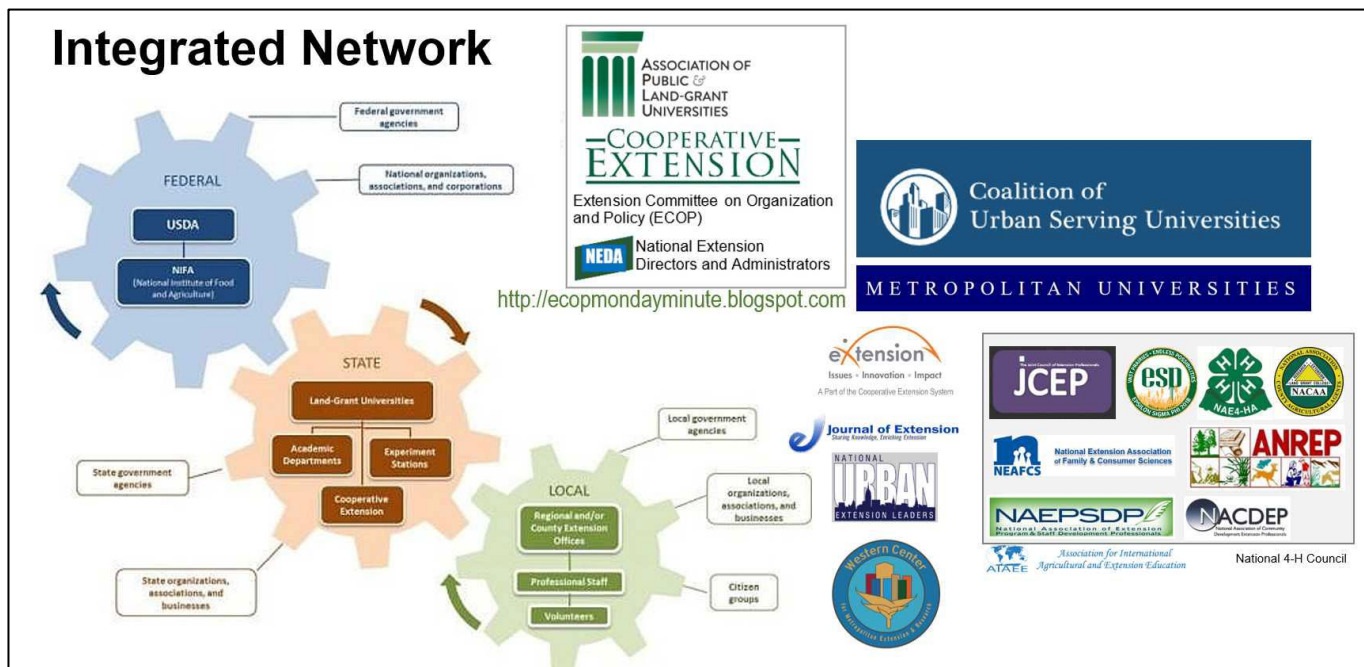
The purpose of this guide is not to minimize the value of Extension's good work and impact in rural and suburban communities, but to increase Extension impact in urban areas through improved knowledge of the urban context and a framework for strategic approaches.

University Extension

Extension is the Land-Grant University's community-based catalyst for co-discovery and community engagement. Extension engages in work that is sometimes similar to agencies, nonprofits, and the private sector, however, the focus is unique because of the triple mission of Land-Grant Universities.

- Teaching and Learning
- Research and Innovation
- Extension and other community engagement

With federal, state, and local support, Extension professionals work collaboratively with university colleagues and local partners on community priorities – leveraging the resources of vast networks to be relevant locally, responsive statewide, and recognized nationally. For more than 100 years, Extension has addressed contemporary issues with research-based information and respect for local perspectives. Worldwide Extension organizations have long played a vital role in advancing technology transfer and human development in 115 countries. In the United States, Extension links research and education with local communities through an integrated network.



Urban Context

Densely populated areas present unique challenges and opportunities for Extension and other community-based organizations. Extension addresses the [population shift in the U.S.](#) and refers to one or more of the following terms for urban, metro, or city Extension.

- [Metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas \(metro and micro areas\)](#) are geographic entities delineated by the [Office of Management and Budget \(OMB\)](#) for use by federal statistical agencies in collecting, tabulating, and publishing federal statistics
- [Urban Influence Codes](#) form a classification scheme that distinguishes metropolitan counties by population size of their metro area, and non-metropolitan counties by size of the largest city or town and proximity to metro and micropolitan areas.
- [The Census Bureau's urban-rural classification](#) is fundamentally a delineation of geographical areas, identifying both individual urban areas and the rural areas of the nation.
- [Internationally](#), organizations use various typologies to delineate and map population along the urban rural continuum.

Agencies and organizations may also have specific guidelines defining large cities, counties, and regions, but the common essence is the densely populated geographic area, defined as urban context in this Guide.

Due to the scale, diversity, and complexity of large metropolitan areas, Extension's work is similar and different when compared with Extension professionals working in rural and suburban areas. One of the unique aspects for urban Extension professionals is that many have not had an Extension experience as a client and it's common to work alongside colleagues and volunteers who may or may not be familiar with Extension.

Urban-Suburban-Rural Interdependencies: Various indicators demonstrate a dynamic flow of people and other resources throughout all geographic areas along the urban and rural continuum. Extension recognizes that many people live in one county, work in another, and enjoy recreation and tourism in other counties.

The [National Urban Extension Leaders \(NUEL\)](#) published a [National Framework for Urban Extension](#). In the fall of 2018 NUEL representatives presented Why Urban Matters to Our Future Success and a [National Urban Extension Initiative Implementation Plan](#) at the National Extension Directors and Administrators (NEDA) and Cooperative Extension Section (CES) Business Meeting.

Scale

Diversity
presence of differences that may include race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, nationality, socioeconomic status, language, (dis)ability, age, religious commitment, or political perspective.

Complexity

NLC NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES
CITIES STRONG TOGETHER

NACO NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES
Large Urban County Caucus

HUD.GOV

CEOs for CITIES

National Urban League

Coalition of Urban Serving Universities

METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITIES

Journal of Urban Affairs
The Journal of the Urban Affairs Association

URBAN EXTENSION LEADERS

NEW URBAN AGENDA

Habitat for Humanity

Urban Context

Urban-Rural Continuum

extension.osu.edu/urban-extension

CFAES

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL, AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q. Is Extension just for agriculture?

A. While food, agriculture, the environment, and natural resources are important aspects of Extension, other dimensions include community development, health, and youth through 4-H youth development. With a community-based approach, Extension reflects local priorities.

Q. Why do cities need Extension when there are so many other resources available?

A. Extension partners with others in the community to bring unique resources available exclusively through the Land-Grant University network - adding to and not replacing or duplicating efforts to address the city's most pressing issues. Sometimes, Extension takes the lead and other times, Extension contributes to impacts in other meaningful ways.

Q. Where are some examples and best practices of urban Extension?

A. The [Journal of Extension \(JOE\)](#), the [Journal of Human Sciences and Extension \(JHSE\) -2017 and 2022](#), and other [journals](#) document many examples of urban Extension in a variety of impact areas.

Resources for Urban Engagement

Being a part of the city is a privilege for faculty and staff working with Land-Grant and other [metropolitan](#) and [urban serving universities](#). Metropolitan communities are filled with unique opportunities for teaching, [research](#), [outreach](#), and [communications](#). Urban Extension engages multiple people who share the commitment to the quality of life in metropolitan communities, including urban Extension personnel, urban university colleagues, volunteers, advocates, and partners.

- [Engagement Scholarship Consortium](#)
 - [Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities \(APLU\) Task Force on the New Engagement](#)
 - [OSU Extension Network Graphic \(illustrates the many dimensions of urban Extension\)](#)
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To learn more about urban Extension's history, contemporary context, and network of resources, visit the many resources available through Extension Foundation. [Resource linked here.](#)

This [guide](#) and related videos are frequently updated based on the perspective of people committed to engagement in urban communities. If you have a suggestion, please share it with [Michelle Gaston](#).

Leadership in the City Bulletin Series, 2022
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