Urban Center/Institute Sub-Committee of Urban Extension Task Force
Conference Call on August 22, 2014 at 10 AM

Attendees: Joe Schaefer, Lisa Krimsky, Jonathan Mayer, Elver Pardo, Richard Tyson, Michael Gutter, Jim Fletcher, Stephen Gran, Monica Elliott

Began conference call with SWOT analysis of Urban Center location – on campus vs. regional:

➢ Urban Center on Campus (Gainesville)
  - Strengths
    o One person (director) or more to develop relationships with faculty across campus that have various expertise that could be useful to help address issues in urban areas around the state; and then broker this expertise where needed
    o Identify what each group on campus does across IFAS and across UF; perhaps across entire state of Florida
    o Serve as clearing house to provide information regarding what other states or urban areas are doing
  - Weaknesses
    o Might not be as responsive or nimble
    o Difficult to form partnerships in urban areas because located in Gainesville
    o Liable to become an institute/center that only wants to increase number of affiliated faculty, funding, etc. in Gainesville
    o Not as visible to rest of state, especially urban areas
    o Liable to become too inward looking and not outward looking
  - Opportunities
    o Greater access to UF faculty (not just IFAS faculty); could have affiliate faculty system, e.g., Water Institute
    o Perhaps more visible to administration (and so maintain support)
  - Threats
    o Funding to support salaries and operational expenses
    o Office facilities

➢ Regional Urban Center
  - Strengths
    o Located in the middle of the action
    o Grass roots approach
    o Already have or easier to form relationships with local community leaders, colleges, etc.
  - Weaknesses
    o Local politics
    o Not as close to IFAS and UF resources located on main campus
  - Opportunities
    o In addition to serving as one of the front doors to UF, regional centers could collaborate with local Universities that have expertise to help address local issues.
Some of these universities are already more engaged and more visible locally than UF.

- Threats
  - Funding to support faculty and/or staff that would run these centers and operational expenses
  - Office facilities that should be in the center of urban centers and perhaps co-located with other important/visible/engaged urban agencies or organizations

Did not complete the SWOT analysis as we began discussion regarding:
- Would there be multiple centers?
- Would centers be co-located or separate from county or REC offices?
- Would center focus be on a single county or regional?

We were reminded that the models we have heard about so far are separate from county offices – e.g., Portland, Pittsburgh, Seattle, Minneapolis, and these may or may not have responsibilities across county lines, but certainly focus on urban area(s) and not a county.

There was some discussion and disagreement regarding whether these centers would be most effective with the traditional staffing model of tenure or permanent status track positions who work on long-term “programs”, e.g., RSAs, or time-limited positions that focus on “projects” and so would provide more flexibility in being responsive to the breadth of urban needs. The latter model would position the centers to complement the services that the local Extension and REC units already provide. The general response was that these centers should be run by a person who is a schmoozer, fund raiser/seeker, and integrate into community leadership which seem to be keys to the successes of urban Extension centers in other states. We need to define mission and purpose of these regional centers to help determine what staffing plan would be best.

**Conclusion:** regional urban center was preferred over Gainesville-based center.

Decided that there are 4 major urban areas in the state where these should be located:
1) Greater Tampa-St.Petersburg (Pinellas, Hillsborough counties)
2) Greater Orlando (across Osceola, Orange and Seminole counties)
3) Greater Jacksonville (which is all of Duval county)
4) Southeastern Florida (urban Palm Beach, Broward and Miami-Dade counties)

**To Do:**
- Develop criteria for selection of first urban center from the above. This might include:
  - Major funding sources, such as corporations, foundations
  - Activities or resources at local level, including local colleges and universities
  - Send your list to the entire group via e-mail.
- Examine centers at Pittsburgh, Portland, Seattle and Minneapolis more closely; are there other Urban Centers to examine as models?
For those who will be at EPAF, plan to meet on Thursday night. Joe Schaefer is in charge of finding location for meeting 😊