ENGAGING EXTENSION IN URBAN AREAS IN MICHIGAN

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

INTRODUCTION

The first decade of the 21st century has been a time of profound change and struggle in Michigan communities. Many of the state's once thriving industrial cities continue to find prosperity and revitalization further out of reach. At all levels of government in the state, leaders are working to best serve citizens with dwindling resources and to balance current needs with considerations for the future. Every community in Michigan has been affected by the stagnant economy of the state, but urban areas never experienced a recovery. In 2003, it was reported that one in eight homes in Flint was abandoned (MLULC, 2003). In 2010, the Genesee County Landbank is responsible for large portions of the land; more than 1,000 homes have been demolished since its inception in 2002 (Kildee, 2009). Similar conditions can be found in Detroit, Saginaw, Lansing, and Pontiac. The foreclosure crisis of the late 2000s was not the beginning of the trouble in Michigan, it merely accelerated the problem. In addition, suburban cities have begun to experience the same kinds of trouble that once only affected central cities – disinvestment, abandoned homes, struggling commercial districts, and vacant industrial sites.

Urban areas are important to our state because much of the growth that has occurred in the last 20 years is around urban areas. Michigan's land use pattern slowed during this economic downturn but it has not quenched the desire by some to continue to build out and extend the built environment on to land that is needed for agricultural production or environmental stewardship. As the population of our state ages, we need to provide places that can attract younger

workers with families and adapt to the needs of our senior citizens. The state must also contend with the needs of our population in health, food, energy, transportation and government services. Urban areas can provide infrastructure for all of those needs and offer an alternative to the expansion of urban areas into communities with rural character.

The Cooperative Extension Service, a division of the United States Department of Agriculture, should be involved in urban areas. Although this has not been the traditional focus for Extension, communities and people in metropolitan Michigan can benefit from education in areas that Extension has strengths in: nutrition, child care and child development, agriculture and horticulture, youth development, and community and economic development. There is trepidation about Extension moving into these areas because of its agricultural and rural identity, but urban programming has been going on for more than forty years. Many states are developing expertise in serving urban populations with research and educational programs that are tailored to the needs of the population.

This paper will cover the history of Extension in urban areas as well as the arguments in favor and opposed to this expansion. It will also propose ways in which Michigan State University Extension can develop and support educational and technical assistance programs to urban communities. Programs will be developed using logic models that can link the work of educators and the investments of government and partners to positive impacts in the state. A logic model will be presented for Urban Collaborators, a group of MSU Extension

Educators and faculty that are working to provide assistance to communities through research, student engagement, and educational programming.

URBAN POPULATION SHIFTS

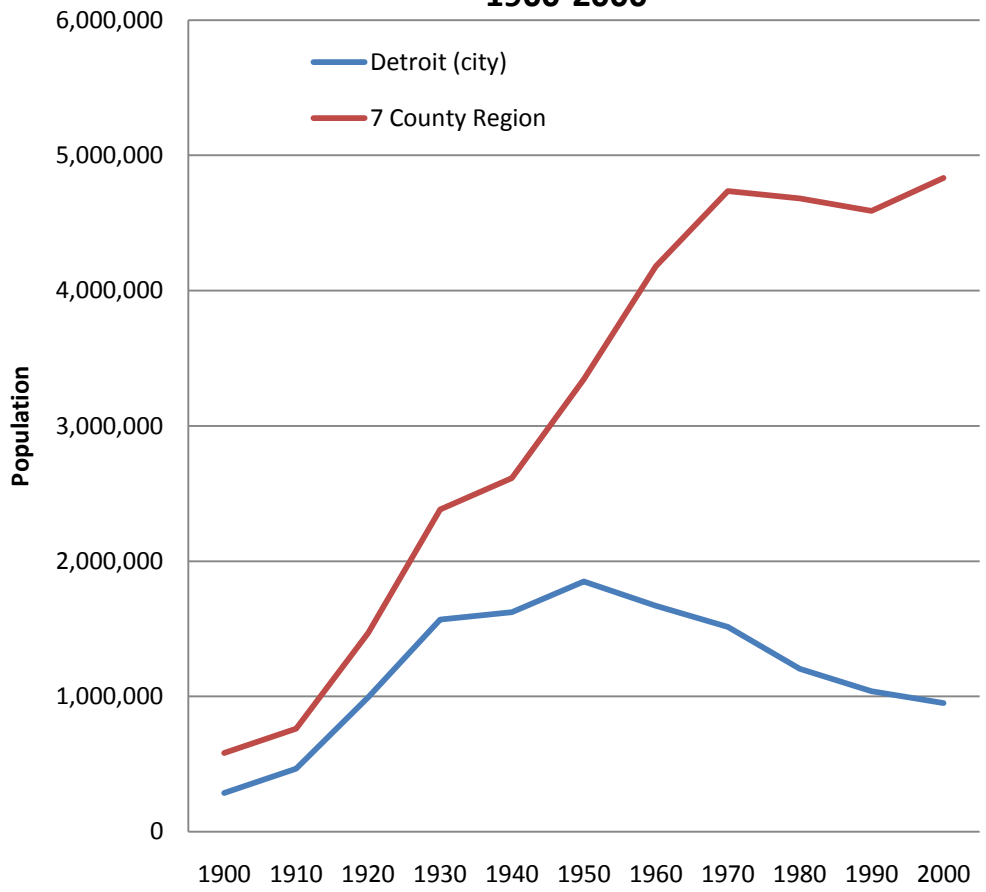
There has been a great deal of urban population growth since the turn of the 20th century in the United States. This is a result of a decrease in the number of people required for agriculture because of mechanization and technological development. Concentrated populations are also a result of employment shifts into urbanized areas. "In 1950, about 72percent of the population resided in areas that were metropolitan or would become so. By 2000, these same areas contained 81percent of the population" (Brown, et al., 2005). Brown, et al. (2005) attribute much of this change to increases in ex-urban housing or people "moving to the country" on the edge of an urban area and then that area developing around them. Not only were metropolitan areas gaining population as a result of in-migration and natural population growth, non-metropolitan areas were losing people to out migration. The loss of population in ex-urban areas has increased metropolitan populations (Brown, et al. 2005). The percentage of the population in the coterminous United States living at ex-urban density (between 1 housing unit per acre and 1 housing unit per 40 acres) increased fivefold between 1950 and 2000[1] (Brown, et al. 2005).

Michigan's cities are highly segregated racially and economically. Segregation concentrates social problems in communities and creates a self-

[1] The ex-urban population was about 5percent of the United States in 1950. In 2000, that population was 25%. During the same time period, the urban population grew 100%.

perpetuating deficit for residents as social disorder is concentrated along with racialized poverty. . Social justice is an important consideration for urban areas because people living in very poor neighborhoods (where more than 40percent of the population is below the poverty level) are more likely to stay in that neighborhood over time and those effects of poverty are concentrated (Quillian, 2003). The social costs of poverty are contained in urban areas and those not living in proximity to poor neighborhoods are largely isolated from it.

Figure 1: Population Growth, Detroit and Metro Area, 1900-2000



WHY URBAN IS IMPORTANT

The State of Michigan, under the leadership of Governor Jennifer Granholm has made the revitalization of urban areas a priority of her administration. During her first term as governor, Granholm created a program called Cool Cities which was a competitive grant program to make urban areas in the state more attractive to young professionals. Based on research about the value of amenities combined with creative workers and industries, the governor announced that 20 Michigan Cities would be awarded $100,000 to complete projects with a focus on physical development that would fit into a revitalization strategy. The program drew inspiration from the work of Richard Florida, whose book, *The Rise of the Creative Class* (2002) contended that workers in the knowledge economy were a highly mobile group who are attracted to areas that share the characteristics of tolerance, talent, technology and quality of place. The Cool Cities Initiative was an effort to create the places that would attract talented workers for the knowledge economy.

In 2003, Governor Granholm worked with legislative leaders to create the Michigan Land Use Leadership Council, a bi-partisan group of legislators and stakeholders representing diverse interests, to study land use issues facing the state of Michigan. Their final report, *Michigan's Land, Michigan's Future,* outlined many of the growth and development challenges facing the state (MLULC, 2003). According to this report, in 1978 Michigan's land uses were 37percent upland forestland, 29percent agricultural, 17percent wetland/lowland forest, and 6percent urban. Projections for future land use showed that urban growth would increase and other land uses would become urban in the next twenty to forty

years unless trends could be reversed. Even before the economic downturn in Michigan became entrenched and went from recession to depression, central cities were losing population to suburban areas. Between 1990 and 2000, central cities in Michigan lost an aggregate of 4.4percent of their population, but overall population in the state grew 6.9percent in the same decade. The results of this population shift from city to suburban fringe include: declining property values, population, and tax base in urban areas, and increasing concentration of less mobile and vulnerable populations such as senior citizens, low-income people and members of minority groups. At the same time, central cities are struggling with aging and deteriorating infrastructure for its citizens and less capacity to make improvements (MLULC, 2003).

Since 2005, the State of Michigan has sought to target the cities with the most need through an initiative called Cities of Promise. "The Cities of Promise initiative aims to reduce poverty and promote community and economic development in eight of Michigan's most distressed cities: Saginaw, Flint, Detroit, Pontiac, Hamtramck, Highland Park, Benton Harbor, and Muskegon Heights" (State of Michigan, 2008). These cities were selected because they shared the characteristics of diminishing populations, loss of industry and jobs, crumbling infrastructure, and concentrated poverty. The governor has identified urban areas as particularly important in the economic improvement of the State of Michigan throughout her term in office (State of Michigan, 2007, 2009). Michigan's Recovery and Reinvestment Plan, which is the state's plan for funds from the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act includes Vibrant Cities

as one of the areas for investment (State of Michigan, 2009). The goal of this area is:

> "To create and sustain cities where people want to live, work, and recreate, we must stabilize home ownership, improve public transit options, and provide support for arts and cultural expression. The Recovery Act includes a variety of programs to strengthen our communities, through support for decent affordable housing and protection against homelessness, and providing funding for cultural institutions that will help Michigan cities attract and retain young educated professionals (State of Michigan, 2009).

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 was signed into law by President Barack Obama on February 17, 2009 to address the growing economic challenges of the United States (State of Michigan, 2009). The legislation is commonly referred to as a stimulus package. The intent of the program is to create jobs and grow the economy but also to provide direct assistance to citizens experiencing job loss, home foreclosure or other economic problems as a result of what many leaders are calling the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s (Isidore, 2009). Michigan's economy, which has been based on auto manufacturing since early in the 20th century, has been in decline as that industry continued to move production overseas. Increases in the price of oil in 2006, created increased demand for foreign and domestic hybrid vehicles that most US automakers were unprepared to supply. This slump in sales was occurring when the current recession began in December 2007 and

the big three automakers, Chrysler, General Motors, and Ford, experienced continued problems. All three major automotive companies accepted bailout money from the U.S. but General Motors and Chrysler filed for bankruptcy in 2009. This has created many additional problems for the State of Michigan because the state has continually experienced higher unemployment than the rest of the United States. In December 2009, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that Michigan had the highest unemployment rate among the states, was one of the states with the largest decrease in nonfarm payroll employment between November 2008-November 2009, and the highest increase in the jobless rate during the same year period (BLS, 2009). It is significant that the State of Michigan has continued to prioritize cities during this period of serious economic hardship. But much of the stimulus funding is tied to specific programs and funding formulas and is not at the discretion of the state to allocate.

EXTENSION AND URBAN ENGAGEMENT, HISTORY

The Morrill Act of 1862 created land-grant universities to specialize in education for agriculture, home economics, mechanical arts, and training for other professions. It was created in large part to give northern states an agricultural advantage over southern states that benefitted from slave labor. Land grant colleges (which later became universities) attracted students interested in the application of practical knowledge to improve their farming, manufacturing, or homemaking. The Hatch Act of 1887 created agriculture experiment stations that served as teaching farms around the country. This effort increased college outreach into communities. In Michigan, local governments

were allowed to levy taxes to support an agriculture agent to bring information from the college to farmers in their county. In 1914, passage of the Smith-Lever Act in the Congress created the Cooperative Extension System. This act linked the system to the nation's land grant universities and created a partnership with the Department of Agriculture. According to the Smith-Lever Act the work of extension was to develop practical applications of research knowledge and give instruction and practical demonstrations of improved practices or technology in agriculture (USDA, 2009). At the time Cooperative Extension Service was created to help develop rural areas, more than 50 percent of the population of the United States lived in rural areas and 30 percent of the work force was engaged in agriculture (USDA, 2009). In the 2000 census, the ratio of urban population to rural population was 79 percent urban and 21 percent in rural areas. In 2000, the same ratio for Michigan was 74.7 percent in urban areas and 25.3 percent in rural areas (U.S. Census, 2000).

Although the history of Extension was to engage with rural communities on issues related to agricultural improvement, a key question is, how has Extension adjusted to the population shifts that have occurred since that time? This can be answered in part by examining the literature. The *Journal of Extension* has included articles on this topic as far back as 1965 and has devoted time to the question of an urban agenda or urban focus programming in every decade since that time. The mission of the Cooperative Extension Service was established in the Smith-Lever Act which created the collaborative between the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), land grant colleges and universities,

and local county governments (Terry, 1995). State governments have also become partners in funding Extension programs (Terry, 1995). Although the first local Extension Agents were tasked with bringing research and technological advancements from the university to the community, the focus expanded to include programs in home economics, youth development through 4-H clubs, and community and rural development. The ultimate question of Extension which specifically serves urban populations has created a constant tension between those who see the necessity and benefit of focusing on urban issues and those who feel that programs should be developed that address common needs, regardless of community character. Still others argue that by expanding the reach of Extension into urban areas, Extension has defaulted on its statutory mission as enabled by the Smith-Lever Act.

As the population of the United States began to shift from rural areas where farming was the primary occupation to urban areas where manufacturing and other employment is concentrated, a number of factors encouraged development of an urban focus for Extension staff in many states. First, some rural areas were developed and became part of expanding metropolitan areas. Many of these areas converted agricultural land into new housing subdivisions, shopping centers, and new municipalities. These new suburbs were settled quickly as people found work in urban centers doing wage work instead of occupations in agriculture. What should have been the response of Extension when this shift occurred? Should Extension have taken action to forestall development or yield territory to its urban expansion and sought new rural

horizons? Neither of these occurred. Extension programs and services were still offered in those communities to the farmers that remained and that were now on urban fringes. Programs sought new audiences in urban areas. Other shifts encouraged new urban programs to be developed, including the geographic nature of political representation in many areas. Extension's mission was expanded to serve areas that were no longer rural because legislators from newly suburban areas now had the influence over budget allocations. In Michigan, Extension takes great pride in its statewide presence in every county. Regardless of the reason why Extension began to serve a population in urban areas, much has been written about the best reasons, methods and programs that can be used to engage these populations in Extension programs. It is clear that Extension's agricultural and rural foundation continues to affect its identity today.

Much of the writing on this topic begins by explaining the characteristics of an urban population and why that population is so different from the traditional rural population that Extension has served since its beginning. Brown (1965) described the characteristics of "the urban environment" and the distinct difference between urban communities and the rural communities. It is clear in this piece that rural is considered the norm and urban is a conspicuous "other". Brown details the centralized decision making that creates apathy in large cities, the educational entities that provide similar training in home economics and youth development, the increasingly professional bureaucratic government, and the ubiquity of mass media that is fragmented (Brown, 1965). He also points to

the ways that people sort themselves out in urban areas as distinctly different from rural areas. This ecological segregation means that people "select as associates other individuals with whom they share similar interests, values, and perhaps social positions" (Brown, 1965). Unlike the (seemingly) homogeneous rural communities, "inner cities generally have people with these characteristics: low-income, little education, Democrats, Catholics, and Negroes, lower class values, transitory, heterogeneous, and blue collar workers." He goes on to detail the differences in family structure ("more incomplete families" and "women are more likely to be in the labor force"), employment status ("labor unions are strong" and "society is heterogeneous with respect to occupations and socio-economic status"), and education ("urban people are better educated than rural people" but also "some poverty groups in the core of cities have extremely low levels of education") (Brown, 1965). Brown deduces that this will result in the groups having different interests that can be served by Extension.

> "While some urbanites have lawns, shrubs, and gardens, others have no space for such interests. Women in cities are interested in homemaking; but the city has more incomplete families than rural areas. Interests of urban homemakers probably vary more in degree than kind" (Brown, 1965).

Brown concludes by outlining some potential roles for Extension in this urban environment. He suggests 1) providing agricultural information, 2) instruction in home economics, 3) community development through citizen participation, 4) consulting with government, and 5) the organization of urban youth programs.

The real difference, according to Brown is that Extension has created a financial incentive for farmers to remain engaged and he does not see a similar role in urban areas (Brown, 1965).

In 1973, the *Journal of Extension* devoted an entire issue to the "current critical concern of problems and crises in urban areas" (Keske (editor), 1973). Dr. Belden Paulson, a political scientist at the University of Wisconsin, acted as guest editor for the issue as well as writing a few of the articles. A guest editor for the issue may in itself indicate how well Extension was integrated into urban communities. In his first article, "Urban Dilemma: Contributing Factors" he explains the origins of the problems that cities were experiencing and advocates for comprehensive planning to create balanced growth (Paulson, 1973a). The second article he authored reports on the research that he had completed through surveying different Extension systems around the country. A questionnaire was sent out to Extension directors all over the country seeking insight into what programming each state was providing in urban areas, discovering the status of those programs, and discussing the agricultural extension model as part of that work (Paulson, 1973b). Early in the article Paulson explains the difficulty with his inquiry this way:

> "Since there's little or no definition of urban problem areas for programming, assignment of responsibility for task implementation, and collection of information for evaluation and reporting, we can conclude that urban Extension is still too new to have become effectively integrated into the Extension apparatus."

Paulson also explained that the survey respondents "often lacked the knowledge of the non-agricultural components of Extension" (Paulson, 1973b). This is despite the fact that according to the U.S. Census of 1970, 69 percent of the United States lived in urban areas.

Paulson (1973b) begins the report by explaining that 33 universities responded to the questionnaire with 46 responses.[2] Of those responses, four of the questionnaires were returned incomplete with the explanation that there was no way for the university to answer the questions because staff was not organized into urban and rural groups. The programming that was active in those states varied widely but fell into six major categories:

- "Inadequate housing.
- Youth, especially the disadvantaged.
- Consumer education.
- Employment-economic base.
- Land-use planning in and around cities.
- Food buying and nutrition, especially for low-income people" (Paulson, 1973b).

Although activities related to urban planning were included in the broad list, the results in three areas were the most common in urban areas: Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (which targets communities with a certain percentage of people in poverty), consumer education, and 4-H youth

[2] Paulson invited Extension directors to delegate the responses to up to three others in the organization (Paulson, 1973).

development. There was some overlap between these areas, for example youth were instructed in nutrition (Paulson, 1973b). Paulson also asked the respondent to quantify the number of staff members that were working on projects serving urban communities; he found that less than 1/3 of the staff in these states could be considered to be serving urban populations. However, most respondents reported that they felt that urban Extension work would be increasing in the future (Paulson, 1973).

In responding to questions about how well the agricultural model would work in urban areas, respondents listed many characteristics of the model they felt were important. Some of those characteristics are: identifying and prioritizing issues, programs developed by professional staff with specialized expertise, the development of local leadership and input, the importance of learning through practice, and that programs should be adaptive to changing needs and situations (Paulson, 1973b). The final question Paulson asked concerned the limitations of that model of engagement for urban needs. He summarized the results into six areas:

1. **Personnel** – staff would need to be oriented toward problems and culturally sensitive to the urban population
2. **Organization and administration of delivery systems** – the organization must be willing and able to adapt to the new environment, respondents also mentioned constraints on budget tied to certain areas
3. **Research base** – the research is lacking in this area and it would need to be interdisciplinary

4. **Challenged by "urban milieu"** – this set of concerns covered a lot of different perceptions about the difficulties of working in urban areas such as difficulty connecting with leaders, population mobility, overwhelming numbers to serve, and preconceptions about the ability of the audience to comprehend the lesson or to be independent learners.
5. **Agricultural identity** – there was concern that Extension would lose its identity as an agricultural service or that urban populations would not understand Extension because it is an agriculturally focused organization.
6. **Commitment** – there were concerns about the number of problems in urban areas, where resources are allocated, and a lack of leadership in emphasizing urban programming (Paulson, 1973b)

Expanding what programming was being done is the focus of Yep (1981). His question revolves around the historical, technological, economic and environmental factors affecting the development of Extension (Yep, 1981). The history of Extension has established its identity as a rural entity and expanding urban programs may be hindered by the lack of recognition of Extension by urban residents. Yep (1981) also discusses the need for linkage between urban focused research on current issues and Extension work. Economic factors introduce the concern that limited government budgets may not be willing to support an agency that is not as visible in urban areas where political representation is concentrated. The fourth factor is environmental factors which

are enumerated as the issues of population density, diversity of the population, intensity of problems, competition among social service agencies to provide the same service, and the layers of the power structure that are difficult to work with. The strategies offered to address these challenges are: targeting a specific problem or population; recruiting a diverse staff to work with diverse populations; and increased cooperation and collaboration to get results, which requires that staff build relationships with other organizations and members of the local power structure (Yep, 1981).

In 1989, two Extension professionals from the University of Minnesota, Krofta and Panshin, used the forum of the *Journal of Extension* to outline an urban agenda for Extension (Krofta and Panshin, 1989). Beginning with the assumption that Extension does have a place in urban areas, the authors see the expansion of Extension into urban areas is a consequence of Extension becoming the "statewide educational outreach arms of the public universities" that foster them and the mandate that their programs serve all populations including those in urban areas (Krofta and Panshin, 1989). They pointed to a rapidly urbanizing population, especially in large metropolitan regions, as moving Extension toward a new role in large urban areas, specifically in areas with populations over 100,000.

Krofta and Panshin (1989) outline three potential future roles for Extension based on this population shift. First, Extension can maintain its rural, agricultural focus but do so with smaller staffs serving large urban areas that maintain the traditional model of engagement around certain issues (Krofta and Panshin,

1989). The second potential role is that Extension becomes a "wholesaler" of curricula and training. This would allow other agencies to deliver Extension created educational materials and information to meet their goals. The third potential role, that the authors endorse, is for Extension to become a problem solving link that adapts its skills to work with cities, neighborhoods, agencies, and individuals to identify problems and develop solutions. The programs would target key issues and audiences with a high degree of cultural competency and a multidisciplinary research foundation that is connected with political structures (Krofta and Panshin, 1989). The authors identify four areas for potential efficacy in urban areas: youth programs, financial resource management, environmental education, and neighborhood revitalization through leadership development (Krofta and Panshin, 1989).

Texas Agricultural Extension Service completed a survey of urban programming and implemented an "Urban Initiative" in 1991 for counties in metropolitan areas (Fehlis, 1992). A task force was created to answer questions about the challenges for agents in urban areas compared to rural areas, what expertise is required in urban counties, the most effective program delivery methods, and the needs for other resources such as faculty and specialists in urban areas (Fehlis, 1992). The task force researched these questions both within and outside their Extension Service and found eight challenges for their programming in metropolitan areas. These included:

1) The size of the audience and the characteristics of the population in urban areas require additional expertise and support to serve effectively,

2) Programming must still be responsive and not retreat into reactive response,
3) Urban programs can be highly visible so they must be highly effective,
4) Urban areas means working with diverse populations
5) Program delivery in urban areas must be part of professional development,
6) Urban Extension staff must create networks with urban staff in other states,
7) Staff must be able to address issues in teams, and
8) Volunteers can extend the reach of program staff but this requires good volunteer development and management (Fehlis, 1992).

As a result of these findings, Texas Agricultural Extension Service's "Urban Initiative" has focused on developing staff and faculty, volunteers, and educational programs in their metropolitan counties (Fehlis, 1992).

The debate about Extension in urban areas has continued to garner discussion. In some literature, the question of whether to invest resources in urban areas was rendered moot by the evidence of programs that began or continued to serve urban populations. An intriguing analysis by Larry D. Terry (1995) questions the expansion of Extension through an analysis of the statutes that helped to enable universities across the country to create Cooperative Extension Services. Terry's discussion and analysis are conducted through the lens of whether Extension's expansion is contrary to its mission and looks at the interpretation of those laws as part of the reason for the change in program.

Although the article has a distinctly legal character, there is a great deal of reasoning outlined for why Extension may have expanded its mission including a declining population to serve in the traditional rural focus areas to maintain power or sustain the core mission of service to agriculture and rural areas (Terry, 1995). The 1953 amendment to the Smith-Lever Act changed the definition of Extension work as "giving of instructions and practical demonstrations in agriculture and home economics and subjects relating thereto" (Amendment to Smith Lever Act, 1953). The phrase "and subjects relating thereto" offered some room for interpretation and expanded programmatic work (Terry, 1995). The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program was established in 1968 "to help poor families in major cities such as New York and Philadelphia by providing health and nutrition information (Rasmussen, 1989). During that same year, the United States Department of Agriculture and National Association of State Universities and Land-Grand Colleges Study Committee on Cooperative Extension released a report that advocated a greater commitment to urban areas" (Terry, 1995; Rasmussen, 1989; USDA & NASULGC, 1968). This corresponds to the population shift from urban to rural areas. Much of the resistance to this expansion originated from agricultural interests that saw the expansion as a loss of focus and duplication of some government functions (McDowell, 1992). Terry argues that the mission of the land-grant university to serve state audiences broadly has crept into the work of Extension to the detriment of Extension. He concludes that the needs of rural areas and agriculture are not being met by an

Extension system that has a fractured focus and therefore that this expansion is the result of a lack of leadership (Terry 1995).

The converse of this argument is that this agricultural focus has held Extension back and has even made addressing important rural issues less likely. McDowell (1992) points out that, more than just the change in where people are living and the kinds of work that are being done in those places, there are fundamental changes in agricultural work and rural communities that make a sole focus on those areas by Extension a detriment to the organization. He points out that if the trends that are consolidating farms into larger and larger entities and driving down the efficacy of rural communities do not change the mission of Extension either through expanding the clientele served or by addressing these larger issues, Extension will cease to exist (McDowell, 1992). He also points out that the research agendas of the universities and Extension are partially responsible for the entrenchment.

> "While it is inappropriate to view Extension simply as the pipe through which knowledge generated by research is disseminated, it is no coincidence that the area of greatest research investment and support is also the area of greatest Extension commitment to resources. … There is … considerably more for Extension front line people to work with where there is greater research support for their programs. (McDowell, 1992)"

If the question of origin is posed (e.g. "Which came first?"), McDowell contends that research must come before Extension staff and that the research agenda will prescribe the Extension capacity. In examining where resources are invested

versus where resources are needed for both rural and agricultural audiences, McDowell finds that the traditional services provided by Extension educators are also part of the problem (McDowell, 1992). He points out that not all of the problems affecting agriculture can be tied to production problems that can be solved “on farm” but this is where the lion’s share of the resources in personnel and funding are allocated. A much smaller slice of the pie is dedicated to helping producers connect with international markets and adapt to a new set of circumstances that are changing agriculture (McDowell, 1992).

Both McDowell (1992) and Terry (1995) blame the problems they observe on a lack of leadership within Extension. Terry (1995) believes that Extension leaders need to focus on their core mission and serve the needs of rural communities and agricultural producers because to do otherwise would be a failure of their organizational administration and a default on the mission of Extension. McDowell (1992) cites the failure of visionary leadership to look beyond what form Extension work has taken in the past. He says that “too many in leadership roles in Extension have no vision of what it takes to improve the fortunes of our traditional clients, much less what is involved in serving new ones” (McDowell, 1992). McDowell (1992) posits that improving in this area when resources are constrained will require a strategic allocation of expertise in communities without past models as a tether.

For the last decade, the North Central Cooperative Extension Association has hosted a conference for Extension professionals in the thirteen states in the upper Midwest region. The conference has increased participation beyond that

geographic area as Extension has continued to expand into urban areas and staff from many states seek a network of Extension professionals focused on urban areas. There are many programs that serve both urban and rural communities in Extension including: 4-H youth development, nutrition education, parenting education, financial or family resource management, Master Gardener training and volunteer programs, natural resource education, and land use planning.

Contemporary debates do not focus on whether there should be engagement in urban areas – the fact of an urbanized population and changes to both the funding formula for Extension through amendments to the Smith-Lever Act and newly expanded mandates to serve populations of concentrated poverty through programs like the Expanded Food and Nutrition Program – had changed. The new tangent for discussion dealt more with whether urban and rural populations were so different that an urban Extension program be created to address the unique challenges of urban areas.

In a forum discussion on the urban question in the *Journal of Extension* in 1992, Lamm addresses the suggestion that Extension have an explicit set of resources and programs developed for urban areas. His argument is that rural and urban areas have the same general needs that Extension can address with current resources. Lamm bristles at the suggestion that the urban/rural divide that exists would be formalized and entrenched through a separation of programming (Lamm, 1992). The issues he identifies as having universal application are water quality, waste management, youth at risk, parenting, health

care and elder care. Panshin (1992) argues that the arguments about maintaining a rural focus or creating a separate set of urban programs is misguided for a number of reasons not the least of which is large concentrated populations that need educational programming as well as practical considerations for the survival of the mission at all because of political concentration (Panshin, 1992). He also points out that many of the problems that have been categorized as urban problems are the same set of challenges facing many rural communities including leadership, nutrition and health, community revitalization, youth at risk, families at risk, environmental and water quality (Panshin, 1992). There are lessons to be learned by both sides from one another.

Despite the limitations outlined in earlier work, research and writing about engaging urban audiences has focused on how staff can work with both the USDA and the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) or what professional competencies and interpersonal skills are necessary to work with audiences in urban areas (Borich, 2001; Webster & Ingram, 2007). Borich (2001) examined a HUD program called Community Outreach Partnership Centers which engaged urban communities with development from a cooperative Extension model. He found that curriculum developed for rural audiences could be adapted to work with urban audiences (Borich, 2001). Webster and Ingram make recommendations about entering and working in inner city communities. Entry is an important step in the relationship that is built among city residents and Extension or other social service professionals. Some of the recommendations

for Extension educators are to establish rapport by working to build relationships, gather information about the communities that are being engaged, work to develop communication with the residents and giving ownership over the process to the community. Many of their recommendations center around showing respect to community members through actions like listening, demonstrating respect for community members' knowledge and experience, and avoiding the "missionary mentality" (Webster and Ingram, 2007). They acknowledge that educators with insider knowledge or status may find barriers to entry lower. "For many educators, the ease and adaptability of programming in these communities was based on their familiarity with the community, longstanding relationships with families, and an understanding of the norms and values that existed in the community" (Webster and Ingram, 2007).

CURRENT ENGAGEMENT WITH URBAN POPULATIONS BY EXTENSION

A handful Extension programs in other states are engaging urban communities around community and economic development issues. These include Iowa State University Extension, the Ohio State University Extension, the University of Nevada – Reno Extension, and University of Wisconsin Extension (Vertalka, 2009). These programs are not all designed to be specific urban engagements but may serve urban and rural communities alike with community and economic development assistance.

Iowa State offers online learning modules and training courses that include databases to analyze community statistics as part of a program called Community Matters. The first module of Community Matters is called Take

Charge and is a data analysis tool to help communities gather the data necessary to complete economic development planning. The data includes population change, employment change, unemployment conditions and the kinds of knowledge clusters that are present in the community (Vertalka, 2009). The other program helps the learner understand Geographic Information System technology through a two day course. Geospatial Technology Programming focuses on community and economic development. In addition, ISU Extension will facilitate community planning, provide technical assistance in identifying strategies and projects, and assist communities in finding other sources of assistance. The onus of the planning in this strategy is put on the community to develop a plan, assess the viability of strategies for their community, prioritize strategies, create evaluation mechanisms, and disseminate their plan in the community (Vertalka, 2009). University of Nevada – Reno and Ohio State University Extension all provide links to data or online data analysis tools for communities to access. OSU Extension provides market analysis data as well as data for socio-economic profiles. University of Nevada – Reno offers online tools to create economic and market analyses including shift-share analysis and local economy indicators. University of Wisconsin Extension also offers online data for market analysis of business districts along with guided analytical tools for communities and calculators for the costs of employee turnover (Vertalka, 2009). Each of these programs is tied to information about strategies for communities. UW Extension provides profiles of “Innovative Downtown Businesses” that other communities can learn from including what niche the business serves and how

the business is integrated with the business community around them (Vertalka, 2009).

Another important online tool by Iowa State University for communities is the Community and Economic Development Program Builder. This is an online clearing house for technical assistance information from ISU Extension, Iowa Agriculture and Home Economics Experiment Station, and other institutes or academic programs at the University. The user creates an account and then can access materials related to community and economic development in a number of areas, such as community visioning and design, economic development, leadership and organizational development, local government, public and private agencies, and tourism (ISU Extension, 2009).

Iowa State University Extension also "serves as the administrative host and fiscal agent for the Community Vitality Center" whose mission is to "serve as a catalyst for innovative projects and initiatives designed to improve the vitality of Iowa communities" (Community Vitality Center, 2005). The focus of this initiative is rural development but many of the functions of the CVC would be valuable to communities of all sizes including identifying topics of concern to communities, research on those concerns and the impact of policy on communities, assessment of different strategies and best practices, and fostering collaboration between public and private entities and among communities (Vertalka, 2009; Community Vitality Center, 2005).

UW Extension also coordinates programs like First Impressions that brings people from different communities interested in community development

together. Each person or team visits the other community and each provides the other with their impressions of the town including the assets, liabilities, and what the image of the community is based on a first impression (Vertalka, 2009). This is an interesting approach to a community assessment that might provide many Michigan communities with some input from other citizens.

AN URBAN FOCUS FOR MSU EXTENSION

In considering the needs outlined by past Extension administrators, many of the challenges outlined still exist for Extension related to urban programs. MSU Extension has been successful in recruiting a staff that has the capacity to work in urban areas and has put resources into training all staff to be culturally sensitive and able to work with diverse populations. MSU Extension has also made efforts to adapt programming and resources to urban areas which addresses the concerns about institutional commitment to urban areas. A strong connection with research is still necessary although there are programs, like Urban Collaborators, that are engaging faculty and demonstrating the potential for Extension as a dissemination and research tool. The challenges of the urban milieu have been addressed by targeting certain programs to specific populations and choosing programs that will demonstrate the greatest impact. The agricultural identity of Extension persists and is an internal perception on the part of some staff as much as it is an external perception by some of the communities served by Extension. This is partially because Extension has been challenged to do a better job of marketing and branding our efforts in our communities.

MSU Extension's urban programs are already actively leveraging faculty resources and funding from other sources to work with urban communities. There are additional opportunities for Urban Collaborators to form strategic partnerships with other outreach and Extension programs that are working with urban communities and for Urban Collaborators resources to be provided to a wider audience. Urban Planning Partnerships has already expanded project offerings to smaller communities with interesting planning challenges.

The other entities at Michigan State University that could become stronger partners with Urban Collaborators are the Land Policy Institute, the Center for Community and Economic Development, MSU's Global Urban Studies Program, and the Small Town/Community Design Initiative of Landscape Architecture. Additional academic departments and schools may need to gain insight into the communities that Urban Collaborators are engaged. Much of the literature around urban programming seemed to say that there were some programs that should be included in an urban setting like 4-H and nutrition education. There are other emerging issues that would benefit from staff that understand how to provide educational programs effectively in urban communities.

One of the emerging issues is how communities should address vacant land in their communities. Michigan has history with Land Banks that might be instructive to other states. But community members need to be given tools to work more effectively with their local land banks. In some cities like Flint, the county Land Bank has become a major landowner and potential developer of land in the community. Planning for and developing local food systems is an

area that requires a multidisciplinary approach and Extension has been an important partner and collaborator in this work. Each community defines the priorities for this work but Extension educators coming from community and economic development, horticulture, nutrition, agriculture, and youth development all have roles within discussions about the food system. Another issue with cross-disciplinary interests is urban agriculture; agriculture or horticulture educators will require assistance engaging urban audiences and community and economic development educators need technical assistance with horticultural expertise. Urban agriculture is a developing interest in many urban communities. There is a need for Extension professionals with knowledge of planning, community development, and economic development to provide leadership in these areas.

There is understanding that each issue of concern in communities affects both urban and rural communities in Michigan. It is also important to recognize that both of these communities and the areas that are between urban and rural areas are accompanied by a different set of challenges, models of engagement, and resources to solve. Urban Collaborators can work to create partnerships that will bring different specialties and resources together to solve problems for Michigan communities and revitalize our cities.

MSUE MISSION AND REORGANIZATION

The mission of Michigan State University Extension is to help people improve their lives through an educational process that applies knowledge to critical issues, needs and opportunities (MSUE, 2009). MSU Extension has

educators serving all 83 counties in the state through 82 offices and departments on the main campus. Extension educators work to deliver and develop educational programs, conduct and disseminate research, and provide technical assistance and linkage to MSU programs and research. Each has traditionally been associated with one or more of three major areas of concentration: Agriculture; Children, Youth, Families and Communities; and Community and Economic Development.

Agriculture educators encompass a wide range of educational programs and may be specialized in a particular field or work around a specific commodity or agricultural product. Some areas include: field crops, fruit, vegetable, commercial horticulture, animal agriculture, and farm business management. Michigan's agriculture industry s the second most diverse in the United States and is a top producer for many different kinds of commodities including three kinds of dry beans, blueberries, tart cherries, cucumbers (for pickles), squash, Niagara grapes, herbaceous perennials, geraniums, impatiens, and petunias. Michigan produces 77 percent of the tart cherries sold in the United States (NASS, 2009). Extension staff members in this concentration also provide leadership and coordination for the statewide Master Gardener Volunteer program.

Educators and staff that are working in the area of Children, Youth, Families and Communities were traditionally working to provide education under the umbrella of home economics. Their work also encompasses a diverse set of specialties including nutrition education, youth development, financial resource

management, early childhood education, parenting, food safety and housing. Youth development programs are more commonly known as part of 4-H. Nutrition education is connected to national initiatives like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) which targets individuals and families that receive food assistance benefits and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) that targets low-income parents. Both of these programs receive funding through the Farm Bill and the USDA. Educators are also actively responding to community needs by providing food safety training for food service managers, foreclosure prevention counseling, financial management workshops, training for childcare providers to improve early childhood education, and one-on-one parenting education.

Staff members organized under the umbrella of Community and Economic Development are working with communities and individuals in counties, townships, cities, villages, neighborhoods, and non-governmental organizations. Education in this area includes topic areas like land use planning, community development, economic development, tourism, natural resources, coastal and water resources, entrepreneurship development, urban issues, and state and local government programs.

In September 2009, a reorganization of Extension was announced to staff around the state. Later in the fall of 2009, local stakeholders and decision makers were included in conversations about the future of MSU Extension and the process of reorganization. This process is a result of fiscal challenges facing the State of Michigan following the national financial crisis of 2008. It is expected

that as a result of loss of tax revenue, the state budget will require reductions in allocation for many government funded programs including Michigan State University, Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station, and MSU Extension. This reorganization will group educators in four institutes for programming. The four program areas that will be part of the new institutes are: Improve Health and Nutrition, Prepare Michigan's Children and Youth for the Future, Enhance Michigan's First Green Industry: Agriculture and Agribusiness, and Greening Michigan: Leveraging Natural and Human Assets for Prosperity (MSUE, 2009). The restructuring process is going forward as this is being written but it is likely that staff will be organized within these new Institutes for program during 2010. These groups of educators, specialists and faculty were first brought together during the Fall Extension Conference in October 2009. A statewide conference is held every fall for Extension professionals from around the state. The first meeting of each of the new program areas was held and staff were introduced to the new program teams that would be developed over the next year during the reorganization.

Each of the program areas would form an institute to guide the development of educational programs. Programs were discussed during this short time and statewide meetings for each of the institutes were announced for later in the fall. The priority in creating the new Statewide Programs were that they address broad, overarching needs and satisfy the same set of principles. The principles outlined at that meeting were: "

- Impact and scholarship must be evident in all programs and activities.

- All programs must include both campus and field staff members.
- Initiative workgroups may recruit non-MSUE individuals (MSU and beyond)
- Only evidence-based curriculum will be supported, though teams may develop pilots and trials prior to statewide dissemination.
- Academic staff and faculty members' effort must be devoted to statewide programs and include some work on emerging issues within the statewide program
- Full costs (including overhead) must be recovered for one-on-one technical service provision in all statewide programs and should include compensation for program staff who contribute to program even if they are not involved in the direct delivery.

The work of Urban Collaborators was linked to the institute named (at the time) Enrich Michigan Communities: Economically, Socially, and Ecologically. The institute was renamed as a result of the new program focus outlined by Governor Granholm on October 28, 2009. In her statement of support for the continued funding of MSU Extension the Governor said,

> "The Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station and Michigan State University Cooperative Extension have historically provided relevant, responsive services that were tailored to our rural communities. As Michigan moves from rust to green, these programs will be focused on enhancing our local communities' efforts to collaborate and innovate in the new clean green economy. I support continued funding for this

> restructuring, with its emphasis on growing Michigan's new green economy" (MSU News, 2009).

This new program focus advocated by the Governor prompted the renaming of the institute to Greening Michigan's Communities: Leveraging Natural and Human Assets for Prosperity. Each institute is also responsible for reporting overall measurable impacts including those areas that are of the most concern to state leaders: employment, economic improvement, and human and ecosystem health improvements (MSUE, 2009).

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT, EVALUATION, AND LOGIC MODELS

In Michigan the cooperative extension system is supported by funding from a number of different sources including the federal government, state government, county government, as well as through grants. Our current fiscal challenges have clarified the need to have program outcomes communicated effectively to all of these funding sources as well as to the public that we serve. The result is an emphasis on program development that is responsive to public need and an evaluation system that can measure how well those programs are meeting that need.

In response, many organizations, including MSU Extension, have increasingly referred to logic models as tools of program development and evaluation. The intent is to have programs explicitly define the community need, the resources that will be brought to bear in addressing that need, and desired outcome from the intervention. The model that is most often referred to for the organization is from the University of Wisconsin Extension (UWEX). UWEX has

developed manuals to train staff in the creation of logic models and their application in Extension work (Taylor-Powell, et al. 2002). Logic models are widely used by other organizations as well, most notably the United Way and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (McLaughlin and Jordan, 1999). As a result, logic models are an increasingly necessary part of programs that are supported by both public and private funds. Although in Extension, logic models are being touted as a tool that can be used in program creation, logic models can be completed for existing programs in retrospect (Rogers, 2004).

Like strategic planning processes, logic models are designed to link a desired result (or mission statement) with a step by step process to reach that goal and outline what will be invested and who will be performing work toward the changed circumstance (Brooks, 2002). Strategic planning uses an environmental scanning technique like asset mapping or SWOT analysis to gather data about the current conditions (Brooks, 2002; Kaufman and Jacobs, 1987). Strategic planning will then select key issues and define the desired circumstance as the broad goal that needs to be reached. The broad goal is then clarified into a detailed vision that has taken into account the capacity of the organization to take action. Finally a detailed action plan with benchmarks or intermediate steps is created (Brooks, 2002). Strategic planning is ubiquitous though it is often customized to different organizations. The essential elements and planning process is the same. Evaluation is completed when the organization using strategic planning checks to see if they have reached the desired result (Kaufman and Jacobs, 1987). Strategic planning grew out of

private corporate planning in the late 1960s for the short range (three to five years) as opposed to long range comprehensive planning that was designed for 20 years of change (Kaufman and Jacobs, 1987).

McLaughlin and Jordan (1999) explain the process for completing a logic model. The steps are similar to those of the strategic planning process. The first step is to collect information on the problem or issue, followed by a description of the context of the problem; in strategic planning this is part of the environmental scan. The next steps involve organizing the parts of the model, which parallel the creation of a strategic plan. Finally, the logic model is verified (McLaughlin and Jordan, 1999). In strategic planning, this is the implementation of the plan with monitoring, updating and re-scanning (Kaufman and Jacobs, 1987). Verification may also include asking questions related to outcomes and impact that have been detailed. The questions include making sure there is sufficient detail to understand the elements, that nothing was left out, that it is theoretically sound, and with a clear understanding of the context for the logic model (McLaughlin and Jordan, 1999). Logic models, like strategic planning, are not designed for a specific program or size of community, for that reason, logic models can be used by small communities or educational programs, but can also be used for large organizations. Logic models are a process that is adaptable, customizable, and scalable depending on the need.

As part of an outgrowth of management models that emphasize continuous improvement and things like total quality management, logic models are another way to design programs that incorporate evaluation from the

beginning (McLaughlin and Jordan, 1999). The logic model is designed to serve as a "plausible and sensible model of how the program will work under certain conditions to solve identified problems" (Bickman, 1987; McLaughlin and Jordan, 1999). It can be thought of as an equation with two sides, what is to be done and a clear understanding of what result is desired. It is important to create a logic model with a clear idea of the needs of the target population, what resources will be invested, and what actions will be taken on one side of the equation and an outline of the outcomes and impacts on the other side. In the middle of the equation is a description of the people that are the audience for the program. McLaughlin and Jordan (1999) explain that "people are in the middle on purpose because the relationship between resources and results is not possible without people."

When used in evaluation, logic models are used to "report a performance story to funders and senior decision makers" (Rogers, 2004). Rogers (2004) emphasizes that the logic model is used to show causality between outcomes and programs. There is an accounting for external factors and context within the logic model. One aspect that is not often thought of in logic modeling is other causes for positive outcomes. For example, a program to increase investment in a community can be altered by many external factors including an economic stimulus from the federal government. That can be accounted for with a logic model that addresses other ways goals are reached.

The United Way has been using logic models for over a decade for their programs to map their investments and outcomes (Rogers, 2004). They use a

similar set of terms as the University of Wisconsin Extension: Inputs, Activities, Outputs, and Outcomes (Rogers, 2004). There is some debate about whether that is sufficient or if the logic model should explain the "causal mechanisms that are thought to be involved and the specific connections between various inputs, processes and output or outcomes" (Rogers, 2004). In examining foreign aid programs, Svensson (1997) discusses the problem of evaluation that only examines results and reporting but fails to determine if the goals are appropriate to the situation. Studies of effectiveness are not appropriate if the decision making process clearly outlines objectives and results. "Results-based management requires that goals at different levels are logically connected internally so that goal fulfillment at lower levels leads to goal fulfillment at the aggregate level" (Svensson, 1996).

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation has promoted logic models as part of programs in evaluation as well as management. "Using evaluation and the logic model results in effective programming and offers greater learning opportunities, better documentation of outcomes, and shared knowledge about *what works* and *why* (WKKF, 2004, sic). It is an important visual way of representing the program and sequence of activities. In their "Logic Model Development Guide," the Kellogg Foundation asserts that logic models are helpful throughout the life of a program. In program development the logic model helps illustrate the context, approach, and concepts for stakeholders (WKKF, 2004). In the implementation of a program, logic models are the core of management and identify data that

should be collected for monitoring and evaluation. During the evaluation and reporting phase, logic models present information and progress toward goals.

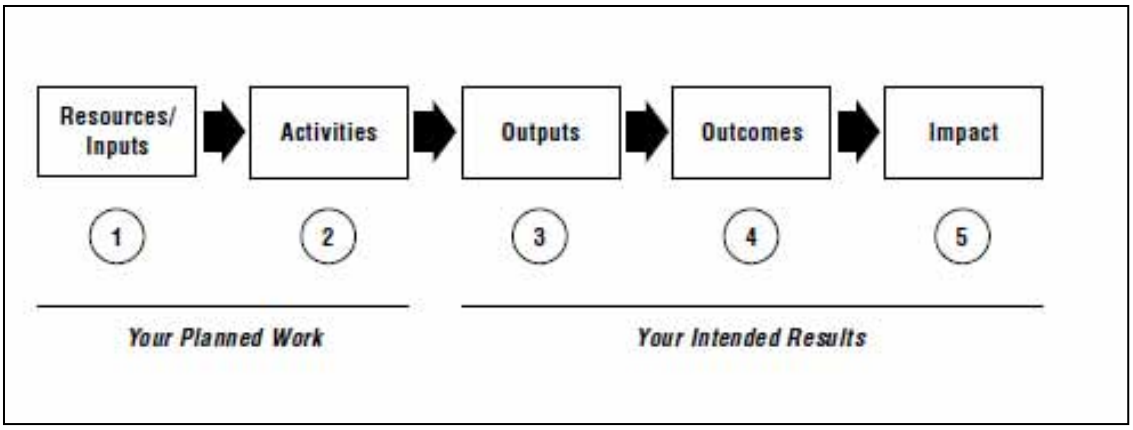


Figure 2: WKKF Logic Model. W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 2004 "Logic Model Development Guide: Using Logic Models to Bring Together Planning, Evaluation, and Action"

The key in evaluation is the potential for the logic model to provide information for a success story or strategic marketing (WKKF, 2004). Important advantages to logic models in strategic marketing include:

- Strengthening the case for program investment
- Developing simple images and a straightforward approach for programming
- Reflecting group process and shared understanding
- Flexibility to be adjusted over time along with changes to programs (WKKF, 2004).

In explaining how a program is developed through a logic model, the Kellogg Foundation outlines the components of a program as factors, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts. Factors are both resources (inputs) and barriers or limiting factors. In other models, inputs are outlined separately from contextual

factors that might create challenges for program implementation. The Kellogg Foundation also defines outcomes as distinct from impacts. Outcomes are changes in knowledge, attitudes behaviors, skills, or functioning. Impacts are organizational, community and/or system level changes that result from activities (WKKF, 2004). The Kellogg Foundation also argues that instead of looking for community programs to prove their impacts, the logic model is instrumental in documenting the contribution that has been made. This allows a program to operate even if there are external factors that are limiting or enhancing their ability to create the desired change (WKKF, 2004).

Their explanation covers three different kinds of logic models: the theory approach, the outcomes approach, and the activities approach. The theory approach logic model is most concerned with the thought behind the program; "these models illustrate how and why you think your program will work" (WKKF, 2004). The theory approach logic model is a great way to explore the assumptions of the program. The outcomes approach logic model is most often used in program planning to link resources and activities with outcomes; assumptions are present but not emphasized. The outcomes approach is most concerned with mapping the cause and effect between program and outcomes. The activities approach logic models are most concerned with program implementation, monitoring, and management in relation to outcomes. This model is very detailed and each outcome is separately addressed with activities. Each of these approaches to logic models serves a different purpose and there is

no model that is best (WKKF, 2004). The University of Wisconsin Extension Logic Model is most like the outcomes approach.

In their description of developing logic models, the Kellogg Foundation advocates describing results first – what knowledge, skills, attitudes or aspirations are desired, then moving to the outputs that are sought – what audience and in what numbers; then developing a clear idea of the impacts – community-level change that is sought (WKKF, 2004). The next step is to think through the activities and resources that can be brought to bear on a problem. The context is dealt with separately in a model that details the theory of change desired. The program theory details the problem, community assets and needs, desired results, influential factors, strategies, and assumptions of the model. This provides the rationale for why the program will work (WKKF, 2004).

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN EXTENSION LOGIC MODELS

Logic models, as defined by the University of Wisconsin Extension, are designed for use by a broad array of organizations many of which have public missions. The training in logic models by the University of Wisconsin Extension is called “Enhancing Program Performance Through Logic Models” by Ellen Taylor-Powell, Larry Jones, and Ellen Henert. This work refers to logic models as a “simplified picture of a program, initiative, or intervention that is a response to a given situation” that “shows the logical relationships among the resources that are being invested, the activities that take place and the benefits or changes that result” and “is the core of program planning, evaluation, program management and communications” (Taylor-Powell, et al., 2002).

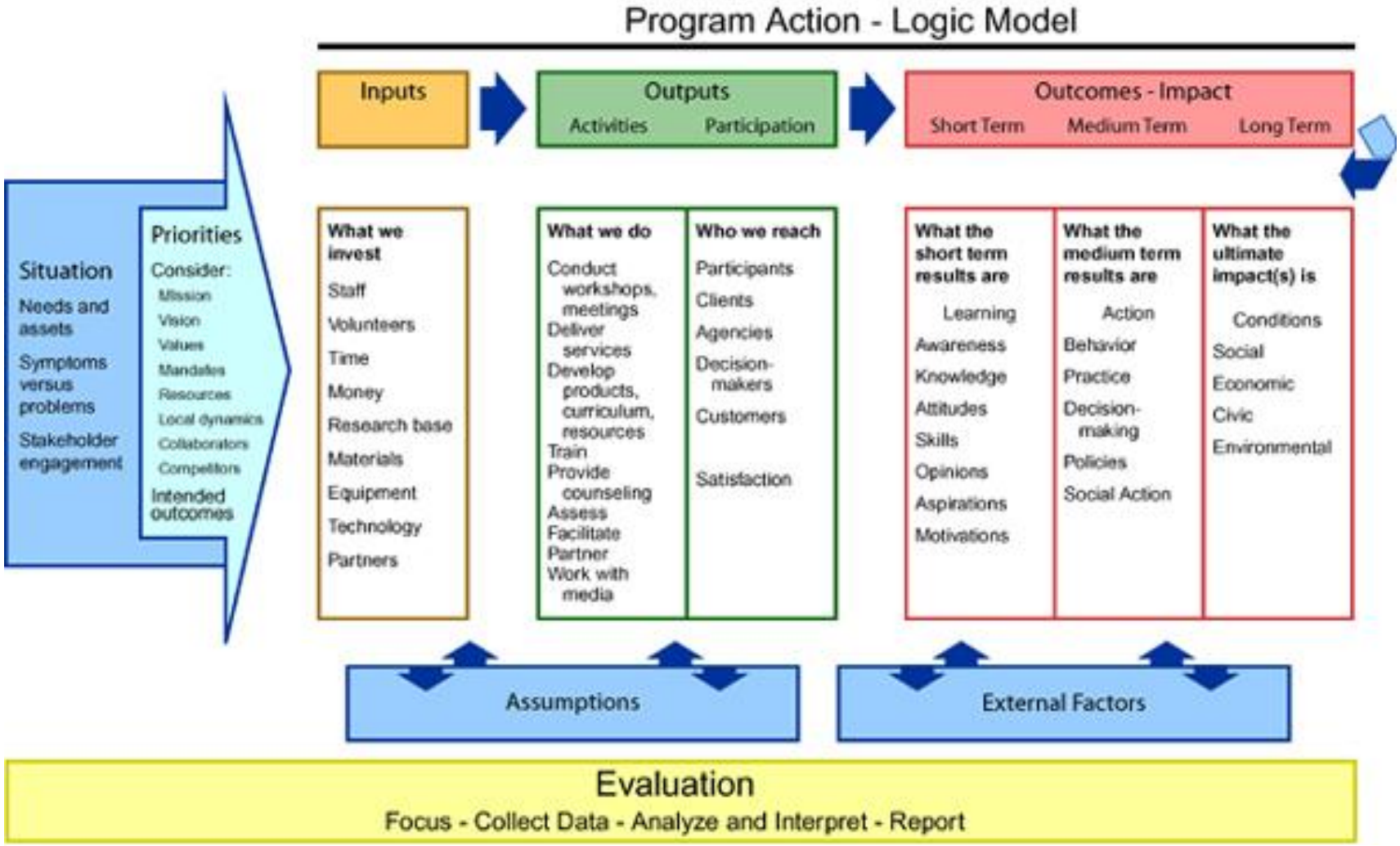


Figure 3: University of Wisconsin Extension Logic Model for Program Action (Taylor-Powell, 2002)

The six main components of the University of Wisconsin Extension Logic Model are 1) situation, 2) inputs, 3) outputs, 4) outcomes, 5) assumptions, and 6) external factors. The situation may be referred to as the definition of the problem to be addressed. Defining the problem should not be rushed or glossed over through the process. The success of the model relies on the proper definition of the problem which includes, the causes, audience for the intervention and stakeholders, as well as what is known about the problem and what resources are available to address the issue. Graphically, space has been made to allow for the situation to be outlined as well as the priorities of the organization before the flow of the model begins. It is assumed that these questions have been addressed before the logic model is completed. Defining the situation also requires a clear understanding of the priority in relation to that issue. This step will help the logic model process because it brings focus. The defined problem may have many potential program interventions. For example, if the situation defined relates to preventing homelessness, there are any number of programs that could be designed to address that issue. If, however, you know that the program priority is to serve families with children under age five that are at risk of homelessness, it will affect the resources that are best to address this problem and will influence what outcomes are identified.

Inputs are defined as the resources that will be invested in addressing the issue. Resources are the work of staff, volunteers' time, partnerships, money, research, materials, equipment, and technology. This can be understood as, **if** we invest this (inputs), **then** we can take these actions (outputs). Outputs are

put into two categories, the actions that are taken ("What we do") and the people that are reached through those actions ("Who we reach") (Taylor-Powell, et al., 2002). Actions can include providing services like training, delivering workshops, providing counseling, partnering with allied organizations, developing curriculum, and completing assessments. Notice that the category does not include meetings, curriculum, or facilitation – the action category requires that each noun (meeting, curriculum, facilitation) is accompanied by an action verb (conduct, develop, provide). It is already clear that certain parts of a program may appear in more than one portion of the logic model but in a different role. For example, if an educator is working on a project with a local community, the community may be listed in the inputs as a partner, but maintaining the relationship could be listed as an action in the outputs. That partnership could influence decision makers and for that reason, the partner could also be listed in the people that are reached through the action. The UWEX logic model uses outputs to define the audiences that will be reached by the actions taken. The participation category can include: families, communities, clients, agencies, decision-makers, and customers (Taylor Powell, et al., 2002).

The results or benefits of the investments and actions for the audience are part of the next category: outputs. Outputs are divided temporally into three sub-categories short term, medium term, and long term. These categories are a continuum that is sequenced. Short-term outcomes are changes as a result of learning such as awareness, knowledge, attitudes, skills, opinions, aspirations, or motivations. Medium-term outcomes are the result of actions taken such as

changes in behavior, practice, decision-making, policies, or social action. Long-term outcomes are changes in social, economic, civic, or environmental conditions. The dependency between the outcome categories is understood as a chain. It is understood that increases in attitudes, knowledge or skills could result in changes in actions or behaviors. Changes in actions or behaviors may result in changes in civic, environmental, social, or economic conditions. For example, if a program targeted business owners around the issue of reducing energy costs, the initial educational program could change the knowledge and awareness of the issue. Following that with utility consultations or energy audits could influence the business owners to take action to reduce their energy costs. Following up later with a visit could find that the savings allowed the business owner to invest in expansion, increase their marketing budget, or hire another person. Throughout the logic model it is important that it be developed for maximum impact or efficacy. The outcomes must be important, reasonable and realistic. Negative consequences or outcomes must also be acknowledged. Outcomes are understood as impacts; the UWEX training explains that “in our model, impact is synonymous with the long-term outcome or your goal” (Taylor-Powell, et al., 2002).

The model also explicitly outlines the embedded assumptions including any theories, beliefs, or ideas that underlie the logic model. The assumptions embedded in the logic model may include that resources are available, that the actions listed will influence the issue, and that the audience is receptive to the actions proposed (Taylor-Powell, et al., 2002). If a program is developed for a

certain audience and they are uninterested or unwilling to participate, it would greatly affect the efficacy of the logic model. When defining the situation, the assumption may have been made that enough information was available to understand the problem. Again, a clear picture of the situation is very important for both the program development and the logic model.

Finally the logic model defines the external factors, or those things outside the control of the organization, that are important to understand. This includes describing the culture of the people involved, experiences of participants, economic and political factors, media depictions of a situation, histories, housing and demographic patterns. These external factors may affect any of the other categories. A budget cut will reduce the number of staff that are invested in the project or a negative article in a local newspaper could reduce the audience interested in the program. External factors can change the initiative but can also be changed by it. Understanding both the assumptions and the external factors helps to put the initiative in the proper context and strengthens the understanding of what is necessary for the program and what factors may have helped or hurt the ability of the program to reach the desired result.

MSU EXTENSION URBAN COLLABORATORS

Although the Cooperative Extension Service was initially organized to aid rural communities, the work of MSU Extension has adjusted to serve all Michigan communities to address critical needs. Extension Educators working in Community and Economic Development in Michigan's core cities are part of the Urban Collaborators (UC) team. The Urban Collaborators Resource Team

includes faculty and staff from the School of Planning, Design and Construction. The mission of Urban Collaborators is to help revitalize Michigan's urban communities by engaging in research, education and technical assistance.

The UC Program uses funding from Michigan State University's Provost, MSU Extension, and the counties or regions that host Community and Economic Development Educators. The faculty members involved in UC provide instruction in different educational programs within the School of Planning, Design and Construction including Landscape Architecture, Urban and Regional Planning and Interior Design. UC is also connected to the Global Urban Studies Program at MSU. These faculty members provide a valuable link to teaching and research at the university as well as current trends in academic discourse around urban areas. In the Urban Collaborators logic model these are the inputs. Urban Collaborators strengthen the connection between communities and the university through a number of initiatives including Urban Planning Partnerships, mini grants, research projects, summer internships for students, and information and educational programs. There are also avenues through which the community information can be brought to the university via the MSU Extension Urban Collaborators members including surveying, community discussion, and informal feedback. These activities are outputs in the logic model. The audiences for Urban Collaborators work include community residents, local and state government, private foundations, businesses, Extension and University colleagues, and community-based, faith-based, and non-profit organizations.

The short-term outcomes of these efforts are increased awareness of MSU Extension and Urban Collaborators, the practice of Urban Collaborators work, awareness of partners in the community, lessons from student work, distribution of research reports in the community, shared learning and networking among Urban Collaborators members, and motivating community organizations to take actions to further their mission. The medium-term outcomes are collaboration with community partners, implementation of findings from practicum or research projects, increased leadership capacity in community organizations, and application of best practices in communities. This will be visible through investment in communities, adequate and affordable housing, social equity, and citizen empowerment that will be evidenced by viable neighborhood commercial districts, mixed uses, higher owner occupancy and population density, lower rates of foreclosure, safer environment, and improved walkablity. Long-term outcomes are all part of a vision for sustainable positive change in our urban communities that is illustrated by the medium-term outcomes. The long-term outcomes are sustainable positive change in our community and revitalized neighborhoods.

Table 1: Urban Collaborators Logic Model (2009)

Inputs:	Outputs, What?	Outputs, Who?	Outcomes, Short-Term	Outcomes, Medium Term	Outcomes, Long-Term
• Funding from MSU, MSUE, County • Faculty • MSUE Offices, Educators and Staff • Mini-Grants • Research • Funding	• Educational Programs • Internships • Practicum Projects • Urban Collaborators Meetings • Mini Grant Projects • Research Projects • Facilitating Community Discussions • Surveying Clientele • Information Delivery (via websites, publications, newsletters, memoranda)	• Local Government • Community Based Organizations • Businesses • Residents • Non-Profits • Faith-Based Organizations • Extension and University Colleagues • State Government • Foundations	• Awareness of MSUE and U.C. • Practice of U.C. Work • Awareness of Partners in the Community • Lessons from Practicum Projects • Research Reports are Disseminated in the Community • Motivated Neighborhood/Community Organizations to take actions such as newsletter, meetings, elections, fundraising Shared learning & networking among U.C. Team Members	• Working with community partners • Collaboration with Partners • Implementation of findings from Practicum or Research • Leadership Capacity in Community Organizations • Application of best practices and Lessons Learned • Strong neighborhood or community organizations • investment in communities • adequate and affordable housing • citizen empowerment • social equity • neighborhoods with viable neighborhood commercial districts, mixed uses, higher density, higher owner occupancy, lower foreclosure, safer environment, walkable	• Sustainable positive change in our community • (Sustainable Communities) • Revitalized Neighborhoods.

Mini grants are small grants to communities which can be used for small projects that will demonstrate new research in action. For example, in 2008 the Genesee County Community and Economic Development Educator was granted $1,000 for a demonstration project showing the viability of small wheat plots in Flint. The project team in Genesee County used the grant money to hire a local farmer to till and plant wheat in two locations in conjunction with urban agriculture work by two community organizations. The goal of the project was to provide an example of what can be done with vacant residential sites to improve the prosperity of those communities. Both of the community partners, Harvesting Earth Educational Farm and Urban Youth Community Outreach are actively engaging youth in urban gardening and agriculture and providing training and education of the participants.

The research agenda of the Urban Collaborators has been guided by community input. The projects have included a comparison of the capacity of community-based organizations in Grand Rapids, Lansing, and Flint, a study of mixed income neighborhoods in Grand Rapids, a guide for the re-use of vacant land in Michigan Communities, a guide for enhancing neighborhood commercial districts, and a resource guide for community based organizations and citizens to create socio-economic profiles.

The Summer Internships provide both opportunities for students to get work experience and communities to complete additional work during the summer months. Urban Collaborators provides the majority of the support for the students and each student is required to produce, with the supervision of the

Extension educator, a final product for use by the team. The final product most often represents a summary of the work or findings of the student during the summer in the community. Job descriptions for the internships are posted in different departments at the University but some consideration is given to students in the School of Planning, Design and Construction.

UC links university research with community need through programs like Urban Planning Partnerships (UPP). This innovative program invites communities from around the state to submit projects related to planning that can be completed by teams of students from Michigan State University's School of Planning, Design and Construction and under the combined direction of their instructors and Extension Educators based in urban communities. The mission of UPP is "to bring timely research in planning issues to Michigan's communities, in a way that supports community and economic development in cities and neighborhoods and at the same time facilitates the practical learning experience of Michigan State University students in the Urban and Regional Planning Program and allied fields" (SPDC, 2009). UPP requires that each community requesting assistance completes a short application that describes the project or community need and identifies the community partner that will work with the student teams to complete the project.

PRACTICUM AS MODEL FOR EXTENSION

Students in the Urban and Regional Planning Program in the School of Planning, Design and Construction at Michigan State University are required to complete the course that is part of Urban Planning Partnerships. The course is

known to students and faculty as the Planning Practicum Course. Both graduate and undergraduate students are enrolled in Practicum which serves as a capstone for their training in planning. Projects are selected prior to the beginning of the semester by the faculty instructors with the input of a small advisory group. Past projects have covered many traditional planning activities such as site feasibility studies, market assessments, housing inventories, etc (Kotval, 2003b). The format of the course is not prescriptive about the kind of project that is taken on by the program. The most important consideration for the selected projects is that a balance is struck between the expectation of the community and the ability of the student. The desired end product for each project is a professional level planning report and presentation.

The community partner is considered the client for the project with the assistance of the Extension Educator or field staff. There are expectations for the client as well as the students. Clients are asked to play an important role in the process of guiding the students in the project. Community clients negotiate a scope of work with the students, give an important contact for the student teams in the community, provide a background for the project, explain the community context, provide feedback on report drafts during the process, and attend the final presentation by the students. Clients must also maintain a dialogue with the Practicum instructors to report on student progress (Kotval, 2003b). The creation of teams is done in consideration of team members' strengths and weaknesses and with an eye for balancing the teams with graduate and undergraduate team

members (Kotval, 2003b). One team member acts as the client contact to maintain communication with the community.

Extension educators also help to maintain this relationship by helping the client understand the timeline and scope of the work that is to be completed. The educator can also help the students with accessing data from local sources, making connections to local people, mediating misunderstandings between client and student team, and coordinating site visits. If the community client is a group of citizens or neighborhood without a professional staff, the educator can help student teams by providing expertise, a comprehensive community context and background for students (Kotval, 2003b).

This collaboration between student, faculty, community client, and Extension educator is beneficial to all parties. The Practicum course provides an invaluable teaching and learning opportunity for faculty and students. Faculty in the Urban and Regional Planning Program at Michigan State University recognize the importance of the Practicum course as a "learning tool, integrating classroom work and pragmatic planning in actual community situations" (Kotval, 2003b). It is a link between planning theory and techniques that students have been learning and the application of those theories and techniques in real world conditions. Students have learning objectives for the class including mastering skills in data collection, field work, creating map and charts, interviewing, and report writing (Kotval, 2003b). Students must also analyze and summarize data, develop recommendations for implementation, and communicate their findings through their written work, the creation of graphics, and in presentations before

clients, classmates and faculty (Kotval, 2003b). Students must not only contribute work to their final product but also learn to be part of a group working together on the project and create a positive group dynamic. Experiential learning, or problem-based learning, is recognized by scholars as having many benefits for students in many disciplines. This pedagogical model offers a deep understanding of the challenges they will experience as professionals in the field and acclimates the students to both the realities of working in and with communities and in project teams (Kotval, 2003b). The skills outlined above are applied by students are also transferable to many different professional settings (Kotval, 2003b).

The benefits to the client are also significant. The program allows community clients to access the skills of trained planners for a fraction of the cost of hiring planning consultants. Indeed if the project is compelling, arrangements have been made with some communities to waive the small fee associated with the project. Many municipalities and community based organizations operate without budgets to hire planners much less consultants; the cost difference between a student project and a consultant hiring is significant. Practicum students are also willing to investigate unique solutions to challenges instead of creating the need for a set of solutions they are able to deliver. Practicum projects are discreet and students in the course are working on graduation, not creating a long-term consultation relationship.

Extension educators may be seen only as a broker for this relationship with no obvious benefit to the individual. Most educators working in Michigan's

core communities are working to help that community address challenges by bringing research or technical expertise to the problem. Extension educators occupy a unique niche because their goal is to provide as much assistance as possible not to direct effort only in one direction like other community based organizations with more specific missions. Bringing in teams of students can "lend credibility to agents' work and provide needed research and other technical assistance that the agent alone cannot provide" (Kotval, 2003a). Extension educators are important links in helping the faculty identify projects for the course because the educator understands both the needs of the community and the requirements of the course (Kotval, 2003a).

In addition to the benefits accrued to individuals in this partnership, there are important returns on the investment for both the university and Extension as organizations. Michigan State University, like other land grant universities around the country, has a real interest in community-university partnerships that demonstrate engagement throughout the state. MSU Extension can count the success stories of Urban Planning Partnerships as part of the impacts their educators are having around the state. Engagement in community and economic development work in Michigan communities is also a stated goal of the university's strategic plan, *Boldness by Design* (MSU, Boldness by Design, 2010). Communicating success stories becomes increasingly important to garner support from decision makers in government at all levels.

The lessons learned from Practicum have also helped to advance the understanding of issues facing Michigan cities. The research of the students

does not find an endpoint when the final version of their report is delivered to their client. That may end the client-student relationship but those reports not only help the next set of students organize their work but the research and innovative recommendations devised are being used by members of the Urban Collaborators team to develop other tools for communities around the state. Projects with similar topic areas can contribute to the development of bulletins that can be disseminated to many communities and interest groups. For example, each student report gathers data for a basic socio-economic profile for the community they are serving. Many communities that want to engage in their own planning or need that same information to complete grant applications or reports can benefit from the knowledge that students have produced in their reports. As a result, a guide to creating a socio-economic profile for a community has been created. It includes sources of data and how to understand and communicate that information to the audience. Over the past eleven years, many Practicum reports have been devoted to the redevelopment or revitalization of a neighborhood or commercial district. Recommendations from those reports can be aggregated to create a resource for other communities.

What other academic units could develop learning opportunities that engage students and benefit communities? The potential exists everywhere. Many academic units do engage in experiential and problem-based learning. The key is connecting that with community need. Extension is a great way to make that connection. The Landscape Architecture Program at MSU involves students in community design charettes through the Small Town

Design/Community Design Initiative. That program has served communities in every part of the state and often does so through a connection with MSU Extension. East Lansing and Lansing benefit from their proximity to the university but Extension can be a great connector for students that would like to expand their reach to provide assistance to other parts of the state. Technological advances are making meeting and learning at a distance more and more commonplace. These tools can combine with academic goals to provide real world experience easier to access for students and also fits with the strategic imperatives of enhancing the student experience and enriching community, economic and family life from the *Boldness by Design* Strategic Plan for the University (MSU, Boldness by Design, 2010).

HOW DOES URBAN FIT INTO NEW STATEWIDE INSTITUTES

Although the reorganization of MSU Extension creates some uncertainty for the future, there are interests in keeping programs that can demonstrate impacts on the economy, employment and human and environmental health. Addressing each of the criteria, Urban Collaborators is a viable program to be part of a statewide strategy. There is a strong connection to scholarship that is part of the impact of Urban Collaborators. Each project aims to build capacity within communities to address challenges and projects may benefit one community directly as the recipient of the project, but other communities across Michigan benefit from the learning that takes place. Good projects become part of the best practices.

Urban Collaborators has only one faculty member whose salary is paid in part by Extension. The other faculty that are part of the resource team are not paid by Extension but want to be a part of the connection to community that Urban Collaborators field staff provide. All of the work for Urban Collaborators is based in research or is providing a pilot for future work. Bulletins that collect best practices for communities are peer reviewed by faculty. The MSUE-paid faculty that are part of Urban Collaborators are actively engaged in Extension work through teaching and research. Cost recovery is part of UC work because communities are charged a fee for Practicum projects and communities share costs for summer interns. The principles for statewide programs are listed in the table below with the capacity of Urban Collaborators detailed in the next column.

In addition to the criteria outlined for statewide programs there are requirements that the program address statewide issues. Urban communities are a large part of the state and 79 percent of the state's population lives in urban or metropolitan areas. There are many issues addressed by Urban Collaborators that are of concern to many Michigan communities including revitalizing commercial areas, building capacity in community-based organizations, reuse of vacant land and brownfields, transportation planning, business incubators and many other topics.

Table 2: Statewide Program Principles and Urban Collaborators

Principle for Statewide Programs	Capacity of Urban Collaborators
Impact and scholarship	• Aim to build capacity in communities to address challenges • Projects have impact both directly (to place of intervention) and indirectly (as a result of best practices)
Campus and field-based staff	• Strong connection between faculty in different disciplines • Most faculty that are involved are not paid by Extension • Educators and CEDs from target cities are part of the Resource Team
Evidence-based curriculum or educational programs	• Programs are demand driven • Resource bulletins are peer-reviewed • Faculty research and teaching is active in communities through UPP projects • Mini grants offer resources for demonstration projects
Academic staff work on Extension programs as well as emerging issues	• On-going research into best practices for communities • MSUE-paid faculty in UC are actively engaged in Extension work
Cost recovery included in programs	• There are fees for practicum projects to cover costs but there is not as much overhead because research by students is part of coursework • Costs for summer interns are shared between UC and counties that host interns

CONCLUSION

This paper has attempted to provide information that will be helpful to Extension professionals and stakeholders that are looking for ways to link challenges facing urban areas with assistance from the university and MSU Extension. It may also shed some light on the challenges of Extension in urban areas by outlining the historical arguments around working with large,

heterogeneous populations in cities. But tailoring programs to an urban audience is something that can be done easily in many cases. In other cases, there may be opportunities for rural and urban populations to engage in mutual learning.

As MSU Extension grapples with reorganization, it is important to realize that urban areas have needs that can be addressed by all programs even if the issues and context are different from the traditional rural constituency. Logic models can help Extension design educational programs and interventions that serve the people of Michigan. The causal connections illustrated by the logic model will assist with program development through a thorough understanding of the context of the problem and the proposed intervention. A logic model can also be developed which helps teams of staff engaged in urban areas around the state to monitor progress and evaluate their work. Logic models are also an important tool used by funding sources and facility with this tool may help staff from around the state to connect with outside resources.

Urban areas do have challenges distinct from rural areas that are focused on agriculture but neither area can thrive apart from the other. Working with urban populations has been shown to be effective and resources are needed to expand those efforts. Urban areas must be strengthened to attract population back to the benefits of residential density. A concerted effort to design programs that serve urban areas and address emerging priorities like energy efficiency, the reuse vacant land, and food systems development can help to position MSU Extension to best serve the population of the State of Michigan. This work will be done by engaging in collaborative efforts with other community organizations,

stakeholders and funding partners. This work will be enhanced by research from the university that provides evidence for success. Extension programs are most successful when responsive research is the basis for their work. Other resources from the University can be brought to bear in communities through experiential learning opportunities for students that meet the needs of individuals, families, communities, and business.

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