

*"The Mission of UF/IFAS Urban Extension is to develop knowledge in human, natural, and agricultural resources and to make that knowledge accessible in metropolitan regions to sustain and enhance the quality of human life."*

**Goals:**

1. Increase the sustainability, profitability, and competitiveness of urban enterprises.
2. Enhance and protect urban water quality, quantity, and supply.
3. Enhance and conserve Florida's urban natural resources and environmental quality.
4. Conserve energy in urban regions.
5. Empower individuals and families living in urban regions to build healthy lives and achieve social and economic success.
6. Strengthen urban community resources and economic development.
7. Prepare urban youth to be responsible citizens and productive members of the workforce.

**Guiding Principles:**

1. Embrace diversity.
2. Improve quality of life through science based knowledge and training.
3. Increase organizational efficiency through innovation and flexibility.
4. Foster public and private partnerships.
5. Support municipal and county governments in metropolitan regions.
6. Respond to community needs.

**Strategic Plan**

The University of Florida's Urban Extension Strategic Plan identifies a series of quantifiable steps that guide activities and resources to accomplish predetermined outcomes, along with a suggested time frame for implementation and the responsible agency or partnership. The Strategic Plan itself is best seen as a long-term process, a living and adaptable plan of action, and not a static product.

**Glossary**

**Essential Element** – criteria, fundamental aspects of urban extension

**Key Outcome** - a thing aimed at or sought

**Performance Indicator** – a measure that demonstrates effectiveness in achieving a **KO** (Low, Moderate, Good, Optimal)

**Alternatives for Action** – process(es) suggested to achieve progress in moving a **PI** up one level (e.g., Low → Moderate)

Specific Essential Elements and Performance Indicators provide a framework for defining Urban Extension and assessing Strategic Plan maturation, implementation and success. The Essential Elements reflect the mission and goals set by the Urban Extension Task Force, following Dean’s initial guidance.

Performance Indicators enable measureable progress towards the achievement of the Key Outcomes for each Essential Element. Each Essential Element’s Performance Indicators are to be monitored to assess the effectiveness of Urban Extension, and to facilitate decision-making in the UF/IFAS Extension’s policy processes. The ultimate aim of this tool is to promote improved Urban Extension practices over time, and to further the development of a healthier and more productive life for urban recipients of Urban Extension deliverables.

The Essential Elements and Performance Indicators have been organized into four major frameworks: Institutional; Resources; Partnerships and Implementation. The Institutional and Partnership Essential Elements and Performance Indicators assess changing economic and social relationships that will be necessary to ensure the success of Urban Extension. The Extension Resource Essential Elements and Performance Indicators provide the means for measuring how well UF/IFAS is proceeding in sustaining or enhancing Urban Extension and for tracking subsequent changes. Implementation Essential Elements and Performance Indicators are used to monitor and provide an accurate assessment of the education/research/technical efforts.

The Essential Elements and Performance Indicators could be tied to a periodic (5-year cycle) critique and needs assessment. The needs assessment would provide a source of reference information for Urban Extension, policy makers, and concerned citizens. Such periodic assessments provide the information needed for tracking long-term trends and analysis.



The Essential Elements and Performance Indicators provide the University of Florida and its partners the assessment capability of using an **Adaptive Management** approach to Urban Extension which promotes flexible decision-making. Careful monitoring of the Performance Indicators will help UF/IFAS administration adjust policies or operations as part of the learning process.

### Using Adaptive Management and Monitoring

Adaptive Management is a scientific approach that can be used in an Urban Extension decision process. It promotes flexible, adjustable decision-making in the



face of uncertainty as outcomes from actions and other events become better understood. Careful monitoring of these outcomes both advances scientific understanding and helps management adjust policies or operations as part of the learning process. Adaptive management does not represent an end in itself, but rather a means to making more effective decisions and enhanced benefits. Its true measure is in how well it helps Urban Extension to meet environmental, social, and economic goals; increases scientific knowledge; and reduce tensions among staff and partners.

Using an adaptive management approach will require the consistent monitoring of all Urban Extension Essential Elements in order to judge if these new approaches are effective, and in identifying significant trends. This will allow UF/IFAS to quickly adjust management actions to changes in the urban environment and meet the expectations of the urban residents and partners.

Few activities suggested by the framework are as important to the success of Urban Extension as monitoring. Monitoring the UF/IFAS Urban Extension Strategic Plan is a process very similar to that already developed for business. We suggest a monitoring design that incorporates the principles of sampling design theory and experimental design such as that noted below.

### **Types of Monitoring**

Monitoring here refers to the periodic and systematic measurement of observations of process or object. UFIFAS should institute three forms of monitoring in association with the framework: implementation, effectiveness and validation.

1. The implementation monitoring will determine if the framework is being implemented as designed. It asks, “Did we do what we set out to do?”
2. Effectiveness monitoring determines if the action achieved the stated goal or objective. It asks, “Did it work?”
3. Validation monitoring determines if assumptions and models being used are valid and effective.

