

July 2017

Dear URISA Chapter Leaders, Chapter Members and URISA Members,

I am very excited to announce to you that URISA has taken a historic step forward. During its June meeting, the URISA International Board approved a draft blueprint for a new OneURISA model. The blueprint is the result of several years of hard work by the Chapter Advisory Board and their OneURISA committee. This group of dedicated chapter leaders put together a great plan for the Board's consideration. Working from this strong foundation, the Board made only a few minor adjustments to come up with the approved blueprint.

So, what is OneURISA? First and foremost, OneURISA provides many benefits to individual members, chapters and URISA international. A key feature of OneURISA is that it provides the structure that empowers all our members, chapter members and international members alike, by making them part of the same organization. Currently, it is possible to be a member of a chapter but not a member of URISA International or a member of URISA International but not a member of a chapter. This often causes confusion for the members and the community. OneURISA will eliminate this confusion and provide more value to URISA members.

Other important OneURISA member benefits we hope to offer as part of OneURISA will include:

- All URISA Members will be a member of their local chapter if one exists and all Chapter Members will become URISA International Members. So we will be OneURISA.
- Being able to vote in URISA International elections, run for office, and serve on committees
- Receiving URISA International publications such as The GIS Professional and URISA Digest.
- Receiving discounts on URISA events such as GIS-Pro, GIS Leadership Academy, and specialty conferences.
- Having a voice on the international, national and local stage through URISA and our affiliations with groups such as Coalition of Geospatial Organizations (COGO), the United Nations, National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC), and others to address issues facing the profession.
- Being a member of a stronger organization with a louder voice to address issues important to the profession and community. There is power in numbers and we are facing many challenges to the practice of GIS on several fronts.
- Accessing a larger professional network
- More contribution opportunities to earn GISP points.
- One stop shop for membership sign-up, renewal and information

OneURISA will also include additional benefits to the Chapters as well. We are currently planning to offer many new benefits such as:

- Liability insurance provided for Chapter events and Officers
- Membership administration provided by URISA headquarters
- Access to the URISA International Teleconferencing System
- Access to a Podio cloud based management/communication solution
- Use of the Sched App for conferences and events
- Chapter Website hosting

Of course, URISA International will also benefit from OneURISA including:

- Larger membership and volunteer pool to support initiatives and education opportunities
- Strength in numbers when responding to and considering matters of importance to the profession such as the recent Geospatial Data Act and the relationship between surveying and GIS Practice
- Greater community outreach
- Greater prestige within the larger geospatial community

So, what is next now that the Blueprint has been adopted? A joint task force has been formed comprising members of the Chapter Advisory Board and the URISA Board of Directors. This task force is working on several items. First is a financial analysis of the impact OneURISA will have on the chapters and URISA International to ensure we know what this will cost everyone and where we need to set the dues in order to provide the services and benefits outlined in the Blueprint. The findings of this analysis may impact what we are able to offer under this new model.

Second is a communications plan to ensure all chapters and members are kept informed as OneURISA moves forward. We want this process to be open and transparent to all. Much of the work to date has already been posted to the Chapter Advisory Board Podio space and is available to all chapter leaders via their chapter CAB representative.

The goal is to be able to announce the implementation plan at the GIS-Pro conference in Jacksonville this year. We expect full implementation will take approximately two years.

As I said, this is a very exciting milestone in URISA history. The idea of OneURISA has been considered, discussed, ideas put forward, ideas discarded, and plans reviewed for over 15 years. The desire to achieve this goal has kept moving forward due to the commitment of many passionate and dedicated volunteers who understand the potential of what OneURISA can and will achieve. I applaud all the URISA and Chapter Leaders that have enabled us to reach this historic point. We all owe them a debt of gratitude for their contribution to our profession.

Look for more information to be forthcoming. As always, my proverbial door is always open. If you are a URISA Member, Chapter Leader or Chapter Member and have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me.

Your humble servant,



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