

INTRODUCTION:

In 1982, architect & campus master-planner Ralph D. Spencer Sr. of Spencer Associates in Austin, Texas, presented his concept for the Sam Houston State University campus. The report was entitled, **SHSU: 2000**, and it represented a dramatic look into the future of the University. About ten years later he was called upon again to update the Plan. As SHSU moved through the plan, essentially rebuilding the campus, the results turned out to be amazingly like Ralph Spencer said they would. Sam Houston State University now enjoys a beautiful, functional campus in most respects, especially with the academic and administrative buildings, and with the open pedestrian malls and green space.

As SHSU came to the end of the planned changes, our minds turned to the need for another update to extend the plan for another ten years. Spencer Associates was no longer in business; Ralph had retired some years earlier. It was hard for us to think in terms of working with a different campus master planner, one who would have to start from the beginning to know the University. Ralph knew the personality and infrastructure of the University well. Frankly, we began to contrive ways of coaxing him out of retirement on a temporary basis, to update the campus master plan one more time.

To shorten the story we were successful in our attempts; Spencer agreed to return to Sam Houston State University and develop a new campus plan for the next ten years. He calls the new plan **Y2K+10**.

We asked Mr. Spencer to give special attention to the campus edges and student housing. During the University's 122 year history, it has grown into the City and the City has grown into the University. There is no longer a "front door" to SHSU. Some entries are attractive and some are unsightly, belying the interior beauty of the campus. In addition, we are painfully aware that

student housing, all of which is very old, is hurting the University in spite of good efforts to keep it in as good condition as possible. Student housing is the one area of Spencer's original and updated plans that has been ignored.

Working with Ralph Spencer through the past year has been a pure pleasure, and seeing his concepts for the next ten years for Sam Houston State University's campus is refreshing and exciting. His treatment of the streets on the south side of the campus, his plan for student housing, and his concepts for new building placements are designed to take SHSU's physical plant into the new century with both function and style, which will contribute greatly to the educational process. This plan has undoubtedly been developed in a shorter time period than would have been possible with a campus planner new to the SHSU campus. We are grateful to Ralph Spencer for taking a respite from retirement on our behalf.

Bobby K. Marks, President
Sam Houston State University