

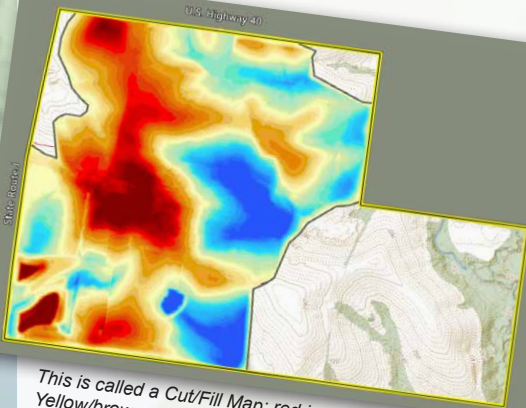
The 500-YEAR CAMPUS

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #266 —

Our first building (7450 Hwy 40 W), back in 1977, was only 1536 sq. ft.; sitting on less than an acre of land. We expanded that building four times to 10,000 sq. ft., before moving. In 1988, we bought 12 acres (5875 W Van Horn Tavern Rd), built a 30,000 sq. ft. building and moved. Through the years, we acquired more land/buildings at that location and built, re-built or added on many times – ending up with four buildings (264,390 sq. ft.). We called it the Van Horn Campus (22 acres); after 30 years, we ran out of workspace and parking places.

The 500-year campus got its start in 2006, when our friend and neighbor George Rewerts died at age 72. He lived just a couple miles west of us, on a 192-acre cattle farm.

Wedged between I-70 to the south and U.S. Hwy 40 to the north, with Missouri State Highway J on the west



This is called a Cut/Fill Map; red is cut and blue is fill. Yellow/brown represent the desired grade.

side, it seemed like a perfect location and size for our next campus. A year later, working with the executor of George's estate, we bought his farm. Immediately we called it the 500-year campus, as it seemed large enough to last that long.

Typically, it takes a fair amount of time and money to get a piece of property rezoned for any kind of development; this was no exception. Everyone wants someone to invest in their community and create jobs; they just want it to be done on the other side of town. The newspapers chronicled it quite well.



The Rewerts' farm (2007). It was gently rolling, with brush, ponds and fencerows. (Google image, 2008)

Before a building can be started, there's a lot of planning and grading that must be done, to provide for roads, parking lots, building pad and stormwater retention. First, the top soil must be scraped off and piled up for later use; the sub soil, on the ridges, has to be cut down and used as fill for the low spots. Lastly, the top soil must be selectively put back on everything but the building pad, parking lots and streets. For our new campus, the total cut was 710,000 cubic yards of dirt, which of course was used to fill the low places.

"...after 30 years we ran out of workspace..."

A campus can and should be much more than buildings, parking lots and roads; for me, landscaping is the crowning touch. Looking at the plan, I smile. Not a park, but certainly very park like. Pretty good start for our 500-year Campus.



Larry Potterfield

The 500-Year Campus
U.S. Hwy 40 West,
Columbia, Missouri
27 October 2020



This drawing shows the location of our new, 360,000 sq. ft. distribution center, on the southwest portion of the new 500-year campus.