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ciency, water efficiency, materials efficiency, health and safety and community. A home built in the Austin Energy service area may be rated if the builder or architect is a member of the Green Building Program.

As home and business owners look for ways to save money on high heating and cooling costs, to have buildings free of toxins and to make them healthier, safer and environmentally friendly, the idea of building smarter and more efficiently is gaining ground across the country. Mayfield reported there are now eight green building programs in the country in cities such as Atlanta, Albuquerque and Scottsdale, with new ones being planned. Their program has attracted national media attention from CNN, Discovery, The Wall Street Journal, the Los Angeles Times and more.

Yowell thinks of sustainable design and building as "holistic thinking."

"I believe that sustainable design, and living for that matter, means to respect and understand resources — natural, human, cultural and social — and simply respond intelligently," he said. "A term I am using in lieu of sustainable design is 'intelligent design.'"

At RTKL, because of Yowell's knowledge of environmental building, he often was brought in on projects at the last minute and asked to make them "green."

"It was frustrating there," he said. "They would almost complete a design for a building and then call me in to sprinkle the green magic dust on it."

In 1998, Yowell won a Kagan Design Fellowship and went to Europe, where he studied how several European cities are incorporating environmental protection into architecture at every level. He left humbled.

"Talking to them just turned everything I've thought upside down," Yowell said. "Europeans think of everything. It's not an energy thing or trees only. It's a way of life."

Yowell grew frustrated at RTKL when sustainable design continued to be treated as a separate entity and wasn't integrated from a project's beginning, so he sought employment elsewhere. After researching architectural firms who were incorporating sustainable concepts into their work, he came to Elliott & Associates, moving to Oklahoma City about six months ago.

Since then, he's been making contacts and collecting the names of those interested in forming a task force to establish a building green program. He hopes to include people from all walks of life on the task force: city hall, OG&E, the state Department of Environmental Quality, building industry representatives, college and university personnel, everyday citizens, stay-at-home moms and so on.

"I think Oklahoma City is prime for it," he said. "I think the right growth is a concern. Norman, Putnam City, Edmond, really everywhere, traffic is a concern. I'd say the top concerns are growth, energy costs, agriculture, parks. It's about quality of life."

Yowell plans to host the first meeting of the task force in late August. For more information contact Yowell at 232-9554 or jyw@ell@e-a.com.



Inspired by Austin's Building Green Program, Jay Yowell, an architect with Elliott & Associates, hopes to start a similar program in Oklahoma City.

shops and seminars.

Jay Yowell, an architect with Oklahoma City's Elliott & Associates, 35 Harrison, learned about Austin's program and took it to heart. He'd like to see Oklahoma City join the ranks of cities with green building programs.

Yowell, a native Oklahoman and a graduate of Oklahoma State University, was an architect with RTKL, one of the largest architectural firms in the world with an office in Dallas, for seven years. He started a sustainable task force in Dallas, served as co-chair of the Dallas American Institute of Architects' Committee on the Environment and put together the first Dallas/Fort Worth Sustainable Resource Guide.

To understand Yowell's vision, it's important to understand Austin's program. Austin's Green Building program started in 1993. With its purpose of encouraging using sustainable building techniques in residential, multifamily, commercial and municipal construction, Austin's program defines sustainability as meeting present needs without compromising the needs of future generations.

Currently, Austin's program has approximately 200 architects and builders as members. The advantages to architects and builders are many, including advertising by the Austin Green Building Program on behalf of its members. The program also rates homes in five areas: energy effi-

'Intelligent design' concepts promoted by local architect

by Shauna Lawyer Struby

YEARS AGO, IT WAS COMMON FOR HOMES to be built with breezeways, porches that encircled the home, awnings over windows and cisterns to collect water. Before a home was built, the building site was a paramount consideration. Such things as placement of trees, the angle of the sun and the flow of rainwater were vital to building a healthy and safe home.

"They were designing with the climate in mind," said Jill Mayfield, marketing director of Austin (Texas) Energy's Green Building Program. "It was common sense building to save money and save water."

Austin's Green Building Program provides information to help home owners, architects, builders and others design and build with health, energy-efficiency and the environment in mind through its web site at www.ci.austin.tx.us, as well as work-

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