Capturing the Spirit of The Crown
Considerations for Social Spaces in Auroville

Queen’s University School of Urban and Regional Planning
Who We Are

• 10 Master’s of Urban and Regional Planning Students
• From Kingston, Ontario
• Diverse range of Backgrounds
Planning and Architecture

**Planning**
- Analysis and design of how a city operates overall
- Big picture view

**Architecture**
- Design of individual buildings
- Detailed view

Source: Team Planning Inc.
Source: An Architect’s Life
Presentation Outline

• Why we are here
• Our guideline considerations
• Our concept design plan
• Other recommendations
• Questions and comments
Why We Are Here

• Understand planning in an Auroville context
• Produce considerations and guidelines for social space
• Demonstrate how considerations can be incorporated into the Auroville context
Our Study Area
How We Conducted Research

Background Research

Direct Observation
Key Informants
Public Consultation
What We Produced

**What We Produced**

**Capturing the Spirit of the Crown: Considerations for social spaces in Auroville**

**Goal**

To design and establish infrastructure and social spaces that create a sense of physical safety for all Aurovilians at all times of the day.

**Considerations**

- Local spaces and pathways should be well-illuminated and continuous. Lighting, such as solar-powered lights, should light the roads and adjacent pathways. This will enhance the overall sense of security during the day and nighttime.

- Trees close to social spaces should be used to create shaded zones near existing spaces during the day. With the use of shade, the area will appear clean and inviting.

- Buildings surrounding social spaces are highly visible in urban environments. The people will be exposed to the social spaces and should be carefully planned to enhance the overall aesthetics.

**Safety**

Auroville is committed to ensuring the well-being of all its residents. Safety refers to all physical elements of the social spaces. The safety of a workplace is important, as it influences its ability to attract customers. The presence of lighting, traffic, physical barriers, and security officer in an individual's sense of safety. The safety measures that impact an individual's perception of safety will ultimately influence the use of the social spaces at a certain location. The physical safety of a social space is enhanced through the use of lighting, fencing, and landscaping.

- Buildings surrounding social spaces should be able to create visual barriers.

- Trees close to social spaces should be used to create shaded zones near existing spaces during the day. With the use of shade, the area will appear clean and inviting.

- Buildings surrounding social spaces are highly visible in urban environments. The people will be exposed to the social spaces and should be carefully planned to enhance the overall aesthetics.
Social Space Considerations
Social Space Considerations

- Achieve compatibility
- Harmonious arrangement of elements
- Pedestrian scale
- Can be organically created
Typology of Social Spaces

Courtyards

Pathways

Greenspace

Sidewalks
Framework

Guiding Principles

Affordability, Environmental Consciousness, Local Identity, Aesthetics

Safety  Connectivity  Local Character  Adaptability  Functionality

Goals

Considerations

Recommendations
Safety

Goal
To design and establish infrastructure and social spaces that create a sense of physical safety for all Aurovillians at all times of the day.
Connectivity

Goal
To create social spaces that are part of an integrated urban network
Local Character

Goal
Social spaces in Auroville will be unique in character, understood and recognized by all as representative of the entire Aurovillian population.
Adaptability

Goal

Social spaces should be designed to be adaptable through maximizing their utility and providing various uses at multiple times of the day.
Functionality

Goal
Social spaces should be flexible and multi-functional in design to allow for a multitude of users and usages.
Applying Design Considerations
Concentration, Third Spaces & Urban Theorists

“The district must have a sufficiently dense concentration of people, for whatever purpose they may be there. This includes people there because of residence” – Jane Jacobs (p.200)

“The phrase ‘third places’ derives from considering our home to be the first places in our lives, and our work places the ‘second’. – Ray Oldenburg
“perhaps the most important structural feature of a city is the pattern of those centers where the city life is most intense. These centers can help to form the mosaic of subcultures by their variety”

“Community facilities scattered individually through the city do nothing for the life of the city. Therefore: Create nodes of activity throughout the community”

- Christopher Alexander, A Pattern Language
Figure Ground & Study Area
## Phasing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOW</th>
<th>INTERIM</th>
<th>DISTANT FUTURE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>50 000</td>
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Hierarchy of Social Space Nodes

Primary Node
- Largest physical space in the hierarchy
- Select location by considering patterns of natural activity
Hierarchy of Social Space Nodes

Secondary Node
• In between primary and tertiary
• Select location based on current concentrations of development
Hierarchy of Social Space Nodes

Tertiary Node
- Incorporate only essential needs of pedestrians
- Relatively small in size
Third Space
Potential Vibrant Third Space Network

Legend

- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary

Solar Kitchen & Pour Tous

A

B

C

D

E

Arts

Health Centre

Library

Potential Vibrant Third Space Network
Node A – Secondary

Potential Function
• Games area
• Seating area

Recommendation
• Replace farmer’s market to enhance vibrancy
• Leverage activity occurring near Solar Kitchen

Image source: http://lib.store.yahoo.net/lib/sportsunlimited/outdoor-ping-pong-300-200.jpg
Node B – Secondary

Potential Function
• Yoga space
• Picnic space
• Reading space

Recommendation
• Leverage library and Solar Kitchen activity

Image source: http://3.bp.blogspot.com/-GlkhFmFx4/T_K9vA-8qOI/AAAAAAAALY/2HIZbWiePyo/s400/Free+Yoga+in+the+Park++for+London+2012+%282%29.jpg
Node C – Primary

Potential Function
• Bike repair
• Fenced in play area
• Picnic and barbecue area
• Toilets
• Drinking fountains

Future Potential
• Mobility hub

Image source:
http://www.thegreenbook.com/advertiserfiles/product
showcasepictures/main/s/s856115835/outdoor_bicycle
_rack_swan_li_s_pte_ltd2011_09_05_12_55.jpg
Node D – Tertiary

Potential Function
• Seating area
• Shaded resting space

Recommendation
• Leverage community assets by showcasing resident’s talents via a participatory public art space
Node E – Tertiary

Potential Function
- Seating
- Shaded resting area
- Community message board
Potential Vibrant Third Space Network

Legend

- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
## Potential Vibrant Third Space Network

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups &amp; Individuals</th>
<th>Specialty</th>
<th>Potential Contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International Pavilion (Manu Gopalan)</td>
<td>Architecture using recycled materials</td>
<td>Construction of structure and furniture in social spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eco-Services (Rebu)</td>
<td>Solid waste management</td>
<td>Designing systems for waste disposal in social spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest Group</td>
<td>Managing Auroville’s Tropical Dry Evergreen Forests</td>
<td>Selecting tree species, planting trees, interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth Institute</td>
<td>Construction with compressed bricks</td>
<td>Building structures and furniture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre for Scientific Research</td>
<td>Research in renewable energy technology</td>
<td>Designing and building infrastructure for social spaces and incorporating natural waste management systems into design (i.e. solar lighting, composting toilets, etc.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Project Recommendations

• Recommendation 1
  – Include residents in the development process of social spaces along the Crown

• Recommendation 2
  – Consider the road network
  – Account for the need for a well-balanced transportation system
  – Account for the need for a multi-modal transportation system

• Recommendation 3
  – Give attention to the expansion of social space networks
  – The population will grow and require more social spaces
Project Recommendations

• Recommendation 4
  – Prioritize and designate land for social spaces along the Crown

• Recommendation 5
  – Concentrate development
  – Select a single hub adjacent to current development where social space can be developed

• Recommendation 6
  – Incorporate mixed land uses adjacent to social spaces
Thank You

Thank you to Auroville Integral Sustainability Institute and Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute