Correspondence pertaining to the Ford Foundation and Dr. S. Firstman from the "Planning Research Corporation", Los Angeles.

Laljibhai Hindocha (New Horizon Sugar Mills) is the father of Suresh and Harish and the brother of Huta. Laljibhai and Suresh were among the 8 members of the Comité Administratif d'Auroville. (Its other members were: André Morisset, Navajata, Roger, Mrs. Anjani Dayanand, Dayanand and Prem Mallik.)

1968, November 1st: *Letter from Suresh and Harish Hindocha to Mother about the Ford Foundation*
AV Archives (Hindocha file)
English

Divine Mother,

We would like to explain to the Mother our work in Paris and Stockholm.

In Paris, we will meet Dr. Firstman along with Roger and André to discuss the following. Firstly, the preparation of a report for the Ford Foundation seeking their financial support for paying fees of Planning Research Corporation, for systems analysis in Auroville.

Secondly, to discover areas in Auroville where systems analysis could be effectively [applied] for the fastest development of Auroville with minimum waste.

In Stockholm, we will contact the Swedish International Development Authority, with proposals to establish a 2½ million dollars printing press and establishment of a large mixed farm.

While in Europe we shall also make known the Auroville project to institutions capable of giving financial for which purpose a Progress Report is being printed. We plan to leave for Europe on 9th November.

Pranams

Suresh & Harish

* * *

1969, January 3rd: *Letter from Harish Hindocha to André Morisset:*
AV Archives (Hindocha file)
English

Dear André,

We acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 25th December 1968.

Yesterday my father [Laljibhai] had gone to see the Mother and discussed a matter raised in one of your letters to the Mother concerning the approach to be made to the Ford Foundation, and about convincing the Government of India that no activities detrimental to Indian interests would arise from Ford's help.

My father has instructed [me] to enquire, from you in this context who was the official at the Indian Embassy, or UNESCO who advised you to make sure that the Indian Government was convinced that there was no CIA activities through Ford Foundation at Auroville. Also if you can obtain further guidance from this official on how we can approach the Indian Government simultaneously with the Ford Foundation – that is, is there any particular department of the Indian Government that we could also make known what we will be requesting from the Ford Foundation?

This information will be helpful in our general approach for having the fees for systems engineering in Auroville financed without many complications. Of course we will also be seeking the advice of Nandini Satpathy in this question of approaching the Ford Foundation. Meanwhile there is here in Ashram an American professor, who has very good relations with the American Ambassador to India Mr. Chester Bowles, so as our application to Ford Foundation has to ultimately reach Mr. Chester Bowles – he will know about it already.

We are, however surprised that the Indian official in Paris should have warned us against approaching the Ford Foundation without having informed the Indian Government unless of course it is the normal practice. We remember Dr. Firstman having said that during his trip to New York on behalf of Auroville he had met the Asia Foundation. This foundation informed him that it was banned from operating in India as a result of CIA activities being financed through them. However, over the past many years we see from Ford Foundation records of aid given in India and Nepal that Ford has financed many projects in India and continue to do so.

Nonetheless we will be obliged to receive information on this count from this Indian Official in Paris and his suggestion as who we should present our case to in the Indian Government.

Two reports – on our Paris meetings and on: the trip to Sweden – are with the Mother now. The Mother has asked us to go ahead with the preparations to approach the Ford Foundation. Once the Mother approves of these preparations, we will arrange to meet the Ford Foundation at New Delhi.

In Sweden we have had a favourable attitude to our two projects of printing press and large scale farm. They will consider these, once the recommendation of the Indian Government was forthcoming. We have already proceeded to have these two projects recommended strongly by the Indian Government to Sweden.

In the meantime we all wish you greetings for the New, Year.

Yours Sincerely,

Harish Hindocha

* * *

1969, January 6th: *Letter from André Morisset to Harish Hindocha*:
AV Archives (Hindocha file)
English

Dear Harish,

I hasten to reply to your letter of the 3rd January.

I do not believe that the official of the Indian Embassy who gave me a friendly advice would like to be quoted in an approach to the Government of India. Furthermore he did not specifically mention the Ford Foundation but, in a general way, American Foundations.

I see two frays of dealing with the matter, which could of course be used simultaneously. One is to have Surendra Mohan Ghose mention to the Prime Minister that you are contemplating to try and get some help from the Ford Foundation and ask her if it is all right or if there are some objections.

The second is to ask Nandini Sadpathy to ascertain that the ford Foundation is not unofficially blacklisted and that it can be approached with no risk of complications.

Another person who can be consulted is Mr. Rajeshwar Dayal who is Foreign Secretary at the Ministry of External Affairs. My name can be mentioned to him as we talked together of Auroville when he was Ambassador in Paris.

Yours sincerely,

André Morisset

* * *

1969, January 22nd: *Set of questions asked by Roger for the project proposal to be submitted to the Ford Foundation:*
AV Archives, AMW, p. 163.
English, reported, but the accuracy of these comments could not be verified

Roger: Establishment of a corporation to raise finance for Auroville's industrial development only by issue of irredeemable preference shares without voting power, control or interference in Auroville.

Yes. Such a corporation can be formed initially to get Auroville going and later all preference shares should be liquidated, as we do not want to employ money to make money in Auroville.

Roger: Employment of paid experts, whose services are donated by the Ford Foundation, to facilitate the application of systems engineering.

Yes – but the experts who come here must work in the spirit of Auroville and as such must be chosen by me.

Roger: Circulate a questionnaire in Auroville amongst its personnel to discover talents and skills available in Auroville.

Yes – but we should choose the people for a particular.

Roger: What image should Auroville project consistently to the world and to individuals?

It is only a little mental affair. You get together and decide what should be the image of Auroville and then bring it to me. I will change it if necessary; and that image must be the final image and must be consistently followed.

* * *

1969, January 23rd: *Letter from Suresh Hindocha to André Morisset:*
AV Archives (Hindocha file)
English

Dear André,

Roger has arrived here and had held a meeting on Monday. He described what progress had been made at Paris and pointed out that no visible progress has been made at Auroville. Navajata in answer said that more schemes had been prepared. A new village called 'HOPE' has been proposed and has been approved by the Mother. The Pondicherry Government has given support to it.

Yesterday Roger went to see the Mother about the questions raised in the report of our Paris meeting with Dr. Firstman of Planning Research Corporation. As the Mother had not read the report Harish and I explained to Roger on what questions guidance was needed from the Mother. Roger asked these questions to the Mother with explanations. The Mother's replies to the questions are enclosed with this letter as I have understood them from Roger. Roger will be writing to you separately about these replies and the Paris report. He has also asked me to send you a copy of the report of our Paris meeting. I am enclosing the report with this letter.

My father and Harish send you their regards.

Yours sincerely,

Suresh Hindocha
Technical Advisor
Auroville

* * *

1969, January 25th: *Letter from Roger to André Morisset concerning the Ford Foundation:*
AV Archives (Janine Panier file)
French (translation: Gilles)

My dear André,

I have seen Mother again this morning about the report for the Ford Foundation. She had asked me to make a summary of it, which had remained suspended, waiting for her to be explained clearly its content, aims and implications – I believe.

Mother has given her agreement in principle for it to be sent at the earliest to Delhi after making some remarks and suggestions, which naturally we will do our best to materialise in the final document to be prepared for the ultimate presentation to the Ford Foundation at Delhi before the 8th of February.

I have, with Mother's agreement, requested that copy of the document presented to Mother be communicated to you to know your reactions and the points you feel should be discussed. It is urgent that you communicate to us your feedback by return mail.

I found Auroville in a mess rarely equalled and a waste of goodwill, which has confused further some and pushed others to take some actions and initiatives that are detrimental to the realisation of the

project. When the fact will be better analysed, I shall speak very sincerely to Mother. With her help new methods of work, organisation and coordination should allow a greater efficiency I hope and try to make the financial situation healthier as it is confused to say the least. Hunan problems, the spirit of the relationship between Aurovilians must be presented to Mother. I very sincerely regret that you are not here to help in the organisation.

I shall try to keep you informed. I hope that the Auroville Association progresses and that you can keep an eye at it. Everything is fine. Everybody is in great shape.

My sincere souvenir.

Roger

*

1969, January 28th: *Letter from André Morisset to Suresh Hindocha:*
AV Archives (Hindocha file)
English

Dear Suresh,

I received your two letters of the 10th January just before Roger left for Pondicherry so that he was posted on their content and I awaited news from him before replying to you. Now I have your letter of the 23rd with the report on the Paris meetings, and Roger's aerogramme of the 25th came to hand this morning.

My comments on the report are as follows:

To begin with it is to be understood that Auroville will not be a mental projection so that "planning" in the sense commonly given to the word is not to be considered. On the other hand the cooperation of experts at each stage and for each problem arising is highly desirable.

The reason why Dr Firstman's scheme appealed to me is that is extremely flexible, that the goals are set quite generally at the start and are approached step by step with a possibility of adjusting the steering after each move. In other words the decisions which are unnecessarily binding for the future are carefully avoided.

But it seems quite all right to plan an ideal sequence of the phases of conception, study and implementation and I see no objection to showing it to the Ford Foundation in support of an application for a grant. The discussion should centre on the first phase, insisting on the paragraph, page 9 of your report/which reads as follows:

> "During the town concept phase a study to assess the economic potential of the Auroville area to support industry, agriculture and people can be carried out, this would give out a town feasibility analysis. On this basis we can determine preferred industry, commerce, agriculture, and other economic activities such that this would be our preliminary economic activity plan."

Concerning the grant proper I note that Mother has said yes to the employment of experts paid through the Ford Foundation grant but it is obvious that the experts will have to be chosen by the Mother at her own discretion and not necessarily from a panel presented by the Ford Foundation and the Research Planning Corporation. That is what I meant when I suggested that the decision on whether a formal application should be made to the Ford Foundation depended on what strings are attached.

I am sorry not to be with you at this time but I understand that the Indo-French fiscal agreement is to be shortly signed so that there is a sound hope that I may come in April.

Yours sincerely,
André

*

Letter from André Morisset to Roger:
AV Archives (Hindocha file)
French

My dear Roger,

I have replied today to Suresh. His report corresponds well to what has been said in Paris, but it is a bit messy. In my commentary, I come back to the basis of our discussion and neglect the details which do not seem important at the present stage because the point is not to adopt a plan 'in toto' but to present it as a declaration of intent destined to justify the contribution from the Ford Foundation to the first phase, and if possible to the second.

Here is in French the substance of what I wrote to Suresh:

"To begin with it is to be understood that Auroville will not be a mental projection so that "planning" in the sense commonly given to the word is not to be considered. On the other hand the cooperation of experts at each stage and for each problem arising is highly desirable.

The reason why Dr. Firstman's scheme appealed to me is that is extremely flexible, that the goals are set quite generally at the start and are approached step by step with a possibility of adjusting the steering after each move. In other words the decisions which are unnecessarily binding for the future are carefully avoided.

But it seems quite all right to plan an ideal sequence of the phases of conception, study and implementation and I see no objection to showing it to the Ford Foundation in support of an application for a grant. The discussion should centre on the first phase, insisting on the paragraph, page 9 of your report/which reads as follows:

"During the town concept phase a study to assess the economic potential of the Auroville area to support industry, agriculture and people can be carried out, this would give out a town feasibility analysis. On this basis we can determine preferred industry, commerce, agriculture, and other economic activities such that this would be our preliminary economic activity plan."

Concerning the grant proper I note that Mother has said yes to the employment of experts paid through the Ford Foundation grant but it is obvious that the experts will have to be chosen by the Mother at her own discretion and not necessarily from a panel presented by the Ford Foundation and the Research Planning Corporation. That is what I meant when I suggested that the decision on whether a formal application should be made to the Ford Foundation depended on what strings are attached.

André

* * *

1969, March 13th: *This funding request, signed by Mother, is sent to the Ford Foundation:*

AV Archives (Hindocha file)
English

To: Mr. Douglas Ensminger
The Ford Foundation
55 Lodi Estate,
New Delhi – 3
India.

Auroville Industry, Commerce
& Finance Department
24 Rue Francois Martin,
P.O. Box 85
PONDICHERRY, India.

13th Thursday March 1969

Dear Sir,

Regarding: Proposal for partially funding the application of a systems engineering approach to the planning of Auroville.

Sri Aurobindo Society – an institution recognized b the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research as engaged in research in Social Science – is sponsoring the Auroville Project in South India in order to promote "material and spiritual researches for a living embodiment of an actual human unity".

Auroville is unique – not only is it a city being constructed from scratch but it combines the social, economic and physical aspects of the city in a manner designed to enhance the evolutionary process in man. As such the 14th General Conference of UNESCO held in Oct-Nov 1966 passed a resolution expressing the belief that the project will contribute to international understanding and promotion of peace, and UNESCO commended this project to those interested in UNESCO's ideals. Again in Oct-Nov 1968 at the 15th General Conference of UNESCO a resolution was passed calling on Members and non-Governmental Organization to participate in development of this project. For reference copies of the resolution and other material relating to the interest of UNESCO are enclosed.

Meanwhile from the very inception of this project the Government of India has been supporting Sri Aurobindo Society in various ways as set out in the enclosed references. The Government of India has made the project known at home and abroad through official channels. Sri Aurobindo Society apart from being tax exempt, from the Government from the Government of India also enjoys various facilities from the Reserve Bank of India such as a blanket no objection authorisation for import of goods/articles and authorisation to open overseas bank accounts. The Ministry of Education has extended a grant for the quarterly publication of Auroville – "*Equals One*" which is Auroville's official publication. At present the Planning Commission is considering what activities can be financed at Auroville in the fields of education and health. However, we are expected to pursue our requests concretely when we have adopted the planning approach proposed in this letter.

It is necessary to outline what little development that has taken place at Auroville at the very onset before introducing – why we at Auroville have decided to apply the systems engineering approach, to the Planning of Auroville what this approach involves with respect to town planning, what type of development organisation and personnel may be required, and where in the above context may be possible for the Ford Foundation to supplement Auroville's efforts in this direction.

Until now most of the work of Auroville has been of a preparatory nature. Some 1,500 o the l0,000 acres of land required initially have been acquired though not contiguously. On this land agricultural activity has already started quite successfully a model agricultural village named "*Hope*" is under construction. Deep-bore welling to raise the area's water resources has been successful a1so. Construction has been taking place mainly at "*Promesse*" where Aurovilians working at site are accommodated, meanwhile a guest-house is also nearing completion there.

For the coming three years it is expected that major construction at "*Auromodel*" will be implemented in four phases. In so far as this advanced colony will represent most of the major facets of Auroville it will provide a great deal of planning data for Auroville proper.

Meanwhile some of the preliminary ideas and planning so far accomplished are presented in a booklet form (English translation from French enclosed). These have been prepared by our Chief Architect of the Roger Anger, M. Heyman and Associates of Paris.

At Auroville various factors have entered our consideration regarding the decision to apply the systems engineering approach to the planning and implementation of Auroville.

Firstly, the Auroville project is of great proportions requiring a large magnitude of resources for its development. If an efficient method of implementation is not applied, wasteful, but avoidable expenditure can easily be committed perhaps necessitating further expenditure to rectify mistakes. It is precisely to achieve maximum result from the least expenditure of resources and time that this planning approach is suitable.

Secondly, the establishment of a completely city raises a multifaceted group of problems which require a multidisciplinary approach that this planning approach can provide, while at the same time keeping to the constraints imposed by the ideals of Auroville.

Thirdly, so far the process of Auroville has been, quite frankly, of a slow nature and unsystematic compared to the possibilities that exist with the use of systems engineering approach, which is highly goal-oriented planning and implementation approach – a process which is efficient and directed. Hence the development of Auroville has reached a stage when the systems engineering approach for the work at hand is a necessity.

Fourthly, the systems engineering approach at the same time helps Auroville discharge its major responsibility of ensuring efficient and effective use of funds donated or granted to it by individuals, industries, charitable and other institutions, and governments.

Fifthly, the systems approach is a relatively new technique employed in the solution of complex problems. In a way at Auroville all the problems of urbanisation will be faced at the very outset, requiring therefore, an equally all embracing technique for their solution, since Auroville is yet to be built and peopled. Similarly, over time as industrialisation progresses with the development of the country, urbanisation will also continue increasingly within the country – presenting those complex town planning problems, which have to be resolved. It is here that the researches and applications of systems engineering at Auroville can contribute a wealth of material in solution of problems related to the development of complete township, and partly to the existing towns.

Having outlined above some of the considerations that have prompted the use of systems engineering, we would next like to point out what the systems engineering approach to the planning and implementation of Auroville involves treated as a phased development plan, which covers the project from the beginning till its construction is completed. This preliminary phased development plan was the outcome of our meeting in Paris in December 1968 with Dr. S.I. Firstman of Planning Research Corporation, Los Angeles, California.

The systems engineering concept for a new town development can be defined as "being concerned with planning, developing and implementing a town in a manner that achieves the goals established for the town with the least expenditure of resources. In this process a town is conceived as a collection of organisations, activities, physical entities – that relate and work together in ways that produce the town's functions and life styles.

Under the phased development plan, there are seven sequential and overlapping phases:

TOWN CONCEPT

FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS
CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
PRELIMINARY DESIGN
DETAIL DESIGN
CONSTRUCTION
IMPLEMENTATION

Below the first three phases, covering the first fifteen months approximately, are described in detail – as it is during these three phases that we are requesting start-up and supplementary funding from the Ford Foundation. The remainder of the phases are also presented in an outline form. A blue-printed Time Chart covering the time limits for each phase is enclosed within.

(1) TOWN CONCEPT PHASE:

During this phase the major activity is to establish the economic, social and physical goals for the town and to determine for them a time sequence. Meanwhile performance goa1s can be set up together with any constraints. The results of this would be the establishment of economic, social, physical and population objectives with relevant budgetary constraints and time limits.

An important activity that has not yet been systematically carried out at Auroville is the identification of both public and private sources of funds so that a list of potential sources of funds can be prepared. Ensuing preliminary fund raising discussion can result in a preliminary fund acquisition plan.

Also during the town concept phase a study to assess the economic potential of the Auroville area can be initiated to discover what industry, agriculture and people the area can sustain. Hence on the basis of such a town feasibility analysis the types of industry, commerce, agriculture and other economic activities can be determined. A preliminary economic activity plan can be then prepared.

An important issue to clarify then would be the establishment of "effectiveness measures" so that the goals of the town can be compared against these measures in a quantitative manner at a later stage of development. Hence these effectiveness measures will lead to the establishment of quantitative goal structure.

One of the most important activities at the Town Concept phase would be the planning of the organisation that would do the town design, development and implementation. Hence a town Development Organisation plan with positions, communications, documentations etcetera can be prepared.

During this phase also it would be determined what people will be needed in the town and a plan to facilitate their coming – this would result in an anticipated population profi1e and a plan to draw the referred population.

(2) FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS PHASE

Because much preliminary conceptual work has been directed to the Town concept, substantia1 part of the activity under this phase has already been accomplished by Mr. Roger Anger's team of architects at Paris. The work done remains to be integrated with the remainder of activities that come during this phase and later phases of development.

At this stage the functions to achieve the town objectives have to be determined – these functions are transportation, education, communication, housing, industry, agriculture etcetera, for which the objective have to be defined also. These functions may have certain normal and outside restrictions placed on them, so that for each of them the constraints have to be discovered for example in the interest of safety and health the building codes enforced by Central and State Governments have to be adhered to, this then is a constraint which has to be taken into consideration during functional analysis.

Once this is in progress the relationships between different functions have to be analysed for example between transportation and industry, housing and pollution etcetera.

The above activities will mean that we would be specifying the town concept as a system. In the next phase – conceptual design all the above functions would be split into sub-systems.

During this phase a plan for attracting the preferred economic activities could be prepared.

(3) CONCEPTUAL DESIGN PHASE

The functions of the town would be split into sub-systems, that is each function would have its own set of subsystems. "Trade-off studies on these subsystems can be performed to determine the most suitable subsystems from a host of alternatives, and those subsystems chosen then can be specified.

Just as in the case of to the functions of the town under the functional analysis phase, objectives and constraints for the subsystems have to be established, while the relationship between different subsystems have also to be determined, for example in the case of transportation relationships between the subsystems freight transport, and factory site and housing are important.

Inducements to attract specific economic activities (factories, stores etcetera) have to be determined. Also planning can be commenced for the integration of the town into the regional economy, the transport network, and the socia1 structure can be carried out; such that we would have a regional integration plan with its design and planning requirements.

PRELIMINARY DESIGN.

Technical

Activity

Examine design options Perform subsystems trade-off studies.

Output

Detailed design specifications (detailed Town Plan)

" .... subsystem location requirements

" subsystem operations requirements

" subsystem interface definition (e.g. pedestrian safety requirements for roadways)

Project Management Support

Activity

Funding acquisition (continuing)
Interaction with Potential economic activities
Estimate overall project cost
Plan for minimum cost cash flow, (preliminary)
Determine development time requirement and time phased development objectives
Design effectiveness analysis – to overall system objectives

Output

Funding commitment.
Commitments of economic activities.
Preliminary financial plan (for minimum-cost cash flow)
Preliminary program achievement, time and coat estimates
Suggested design and operation plans modifications.

DETAILED DESIGN.

Technical

Activity

Design by subsystems

Output

Procurement specifications.
Construction specifications.
Service and social subsystems specifications; curricula, social services, health services, family services, cultural activities, fire communication and data etc.

Project Management Support.

Activity

Funding acquisition (continuing)
Interaction with potential economic activities (continuing)
Coordinate investment in public facilities (hospital, schools, etc)
Determine specific cash requirement and timing of its flow
Plan minimum cost cash-flow
Design effectiveness analysis to overall long system objectives
Plan construction and implementation phase

Output

Funding commitments
Commitments of economic: activities
Detailed financial plan (minimum cost)
Suggested design and operation plans modifications
Detailed construction and implementation plan.

CONSTRUCTION.

Technica1

Activity

Evaluate bids
Technical direction of physical construction

Output

Physical elements of town

Project Management Support

Activity

Interaction with potential economic activities.
Coordinate investment in public facilities
Contract for construction
Maintain control of construction timing
Maintain control of resource flow
Maintain control of design modifications
Maintain control of interfaces
Plan initial provisioning of town
Plan for training of social and service activity personnel
Plan staffing of socia1 and service activity organisations
Prepare software for integrated data system
Publicize town and attract preferred population

Output

Commitment of economic activities
Minimum cost construction
Minimum cost provisioning plan
Integrated staffing and training plan
Data system collection and processing plans and computer programs.

IMPLEMENTATION (Start up)
(Starts during CONSTRUCTION phase)

Technical

Activity

Output

Project Management Support

Activity

Control sequence of' implementation activities
Perform implementation activities – by subsystem
" City services (fire, water, education etc.)
" Social programs (training, development…)
Acquire initial provisions
Train services and social activity personnel
Work with entering population
Measure performance of physical, social and service elements of town-all subsystems
Determine need for subsystems design or operation modifications.

Output

Orderly sequence of implementation activities
Service and social elements of town
Adjunct social development activities and programs
Design and operation modifications

The type of development organisation and personnel necessary to implement the preliminary ideas set out above play an important role in determining approximately the supplementary aid needed by Auroville in starting this project.

For this purpose two organisation charts – (Chart I and Chart II are blue-printed and enclosed) – have been developed suitable to undertake the type of work envisaged above. The initial organisation presented in Chart I will mainly be applicable for the Town concept and Functional Analysis Phases lasting for some eleven months. It is suitable in that not only does it take into account the situation existing at present at Auroville, but also helps implement the systems approach. This also takes into account the fact that a great proportion of the planning work has been carried out at Paris such as the geographical split under the overall co-ordination of the Project Director has been designed until during later phases of development work can be transferred to site.

At the summit of the organisation is The Mother, who is also the President of Sri Aurobindo Society and will guide the work of the whole organisation. The overall responsibility for the execution of the project 1ies with the Project Director, who has a Project Management Team of five highly qualified experts specialised in Law, Economics, Town Planning, Social Planning, and International Relations.

After the Project Management team the organisation is split geographically between Paris and Auroville. At Paris it

is expected that systems analysis will be applied to the studies that are performed there, and also that Paris would be Auroville's European fund raising centre.

Meanwhile at Auroville systems analysis and economic analysis will be carried out on the points outlined in the first two phases of development.

In Chart II the initial organisation, although retaining some of its features such as the Project Director and the Project Management Team, is changed such that it would be suitable for all the phases of development starting with the Conceptual Design phase. As can be seen on Chart II that the Paris work in respect to planning diminishes while that at Auroville develops into a Design Section and a Project Management Support Section under which major functions of the town will be organized, and under which economic and systems analysis would be continuing respectively.

At this point we would like to stress the importance of the Project Director's role especially in providing leadership and making the project work. Sri Aurobindo Society has just such a person capable of fulfilling that role with many years of developmental experience both overseas and in India.

The personnel needed to fill the positions within these organisations are out on the organisation charts.

For the initial organisation period lasting for some eleven months covering the Town Concept and Functional Analysis phases the total manpower needs expressed in man years is about 35.5. Of this total the Sri Aurobindo Society will provide 27 man years, while the difference representing the services of experts to an extent of 8.5 man years the Sri Aurobindo Society would like the Ford Foundation to help finance, so that our efforts at applying and starting the system engineering approach to town planning at Auroville can be supplemented effectively.

Similarly for the ensuing organisation covering the Conceptual Design phase lasting for some four months the total manpower needs expressed in man year is about 16.1. Of this total the Sri Aurobindo Society will provide 11.3 man years, while the Society would like Ford Foundation to finance the difference of 4.8 man years representing experts' services.

Hence for the first three phases lasting 15 months, the Sri Aurobindo Society would appreciate Ford Foundation's help in supplementing our planning capabilities by partially funding the services of consultants and experts to an extent estimated below. These estimates of manpower costs are quite conservative and are very rough.

For Initial Organisation (11 months)	Manpower cost in $
Sri Aurobindo Society:	
For 27 personnel	
27 man years	---
Ford Foundation:	
For 6 experts and 25 consultants.	
6 man year at $20,000 each.	$ 120,000
25 man year at $52,000 each.	$ 130,000
	$ 250,000
For Ensuing Organisation (4 months)	
Sri Aurobindo Society:	
For 34 personnel	
11.3 man years	---
Ford Foundation:	
For 6 experts and 8.5 consultants.	
2 man years at $20,000 each.	$ 40,000
3 man years at $52,000 each.	$ 140,000
	$ 180,000
Approximate total supplementary funding needed:	$ 430,000
	or Rs. 32,25,000/-

We will be glad to discuss and explain these estimates in detail. Further when making a specific request for funding, we will be much more explicit.

Hence we are requesting support for the start-up phases of the project and for that part of the planning manpower that is currently beyond the capacity of Sri Aurobindo Society to provide.

An important question that has been left open concerns the financing or development at Auroville. Funds will be necessary to buy and develop the land, to build an infrastructure, to provide commercial, industrial, university, housing and training facilities. However, some of the land has already been acquired, while for education and training the Government of India financial aid is most probable. The international sector of the city will be financed by various foreign governments for the construction of pavilions and related facilities.

The Sri Aurobindo Society is hoping to establish a non-profit development corporation which will acquire funds by floating non-participating preference stock to be sold to foreign governments and to the world markets. The corporation

can acquire land and build up the housing, commercia1 and industrial activities. The income derived from the sale of housing, and from the operation of commercial and industrial concerns can be used for redeeming the preference stock. However this overall financial plan needs more careful determination and study.

We would appreciate discussing the above further and await your suggestion for an appropriate time to meet again. We will be pleased to meet at your Hew Delhi Office.

Enclosure: As per list enclosed.

The President
Sri Aurobindo Society.

Enclosures:

1.	Auroville in UNESCO	2 copies
2.	Resolution Number 4.131 Adopted in the 15th General Conference of UNESCO on "AUROVILLE" held in Paris October 1968	2 copies
3.	Indian National Commission letter dt.28th April '67	2 copies
4.	Indian National Commission 1etter dt.28th April '67	2 copies
5.	Indian National Commission letter dt. 11th July '67	2 copies
6.	Indian National Commission letter dt. 2nd Dec '67	2 copies
7.	Gazette Notification	2 copies
8.	Memorandum of Association and Rules and Regulations of Sri Aurobindo Society	
9.	Sri Aurobindo Society Pamphlet	
10.	Blue Print Time Chart for seven phases of development	
11.	Blue Print Organisation Chart a. Organisation Chart I for the initial organisation of Auroville b. Organisation Chart II for the ensuing organisation of Auroville	2 copies
12.	"First Approach to Town" – a study with detailed illustration (In French).	
13.	"First Approach to Town" (A translation to English of the above study).	
14.	Auroville Universal Cultural Township Project First Phase of Development 1969-1974.	
15.	Auroville Literature (Green folder)	

* * *

1969, March 29th: *The Ford Foundation declines funding the planning of Auroville:*
AV Archives (Hindocha file)
English

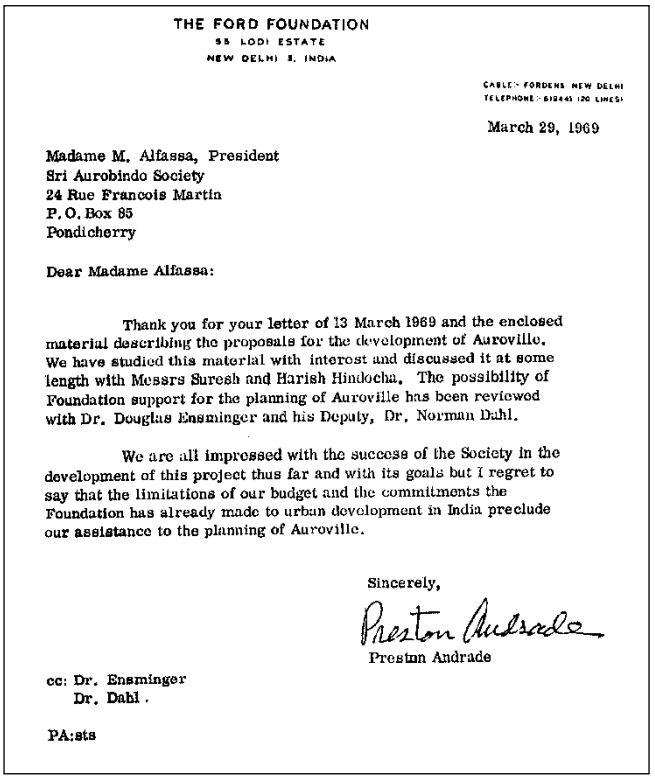
Dear M. Alfassa, President

Thank you for your letter of 13 March 1969 and the enclosed material describing the proposal for the development of Auroville. We have studied this material with interest and discussed it at some length with Messrs Suresh and Harish Hindocha. The possibility of Foundation support for the planning of Auroville has been reviewed with Dr. Douglas Ensminger and his Deputy, Dr. Norman Dahl.

We are all impressed with the success of the Society in the development of this project thus far and with its goals but I regret to say that the limitations of our budget and the commitments the Foundation has already made to urban development in India preclude our assistance in the planning of Auroville.

Sincerely

Preston Andrade



THE FORD FOUNDATION
55 LODI ESTATE
NEW DELHI 3, INDIA

CABLE: FORDENS NEW DELHI
TELEPHONE: 61240 (20 LINES)

March 29, 1969

Madame M. Alfassa, President
Sri Aurobindo Society
24 Rue Francois Martin
P.O. Box 85
Pondicherry

Dear Madame Alfassa:

Thank you for your letter of 13 March 1969 and the enclosed material describing the proposals for the development of Auroville. We have studied this material with interest and discussed it at some length with Messrs Suresh and Harish Hindocha. The possibility of Foundation support for the planning of Auroville has been reviewed with Dr. Douglas Ensminger and his Deputy, Dr. Norman Dahl.

We are all impressed with the success of the Society in the development of this project thus far and with its goals but I regret to say that the limitations of our budget and the commitments the Foundation has already made to urban development in India preclude our assistance to the planning of Auroville.

Sincerely,

Preston Andrade

Preston Andrade

cc: Dr. Ensminger
Dr. Dahl.

PA:sts

* * *

1969, December 11th: *<u>Personal</u> letter from Dr. S. I. Firstman to Suresh Hindocha:*
AV Archives (Hindocha File)
English

Dear Suresh,

I wanted to say a few other things to you that are not really appropriate material for company stationary, they are personal items.

The long letter attached, Suresh, was very hard for me to write. I put it off and them "blocked" in writing it. It pained me to point out what I feel are the realities. Monies are needed to develop Auroville – it won't happen otherwise. And, significant amounts of monies will not be available except by investment. Suresh, these are the hard realities and the question is, can the Society accept these and move ahead in a manner that can accommodate the goals for Auroville while still being realistic with respect to national or even international financing. This comment will become more clear to you when you read the larger letter.

I also want to comment on the paper by William P. Netter that you sent: "The Problem of television Programming in India". As a layman in this field, I found Netter's paper to be extremely insightful. I am especially intrigued by his seeking way to communicate on other than the world level through use of the television medium. And, I am very supportive of his sensitivity to not creating materialism amongst people while teaching them to upgrade their lifestyle. We in the Western world have done a great job of creating a society of materialism. And, we have sowed much discontent amongst people whose expectations cannot realistically be fulfilled at present, within the economic structure of the western world. Television can be such a powerful force for the positive development of people. And, I look forward to future papers by Netter to follow his progress in this path.

Without elaboration, Suresh, these are the things that I wanted to say to you in a personal way. Please give my regards to Harish, I look forward to hearing from you.

Sd/- Sid.

*

Letter on "Planning Research Corporation" letterhead
AV Archives (Hindocha File)
English

Dear Suresh:

This letter is a long time overdue. I could offer numerous reasons such as heavy demands on my time and much travel, but those would be Just more words – the kind that I'm sure you hear every day there in Auroville. There are numerous things I want to write to you, so the letter will be long – and somewhat rambling.

First, I want to express my gratitude for the blessings of the Mother. I am pleased to be accepted by her.

There are several- topics I want to deal with: The first will be what I learned ay the United Nations Headquarters in New York concerning funding support for Auroville; second, I will summarize what I have learned to date, both at the U.N. and the World Bank, concerning international sources of development funds; and last, I want to suggest some issues that must be considered in selecting a preferred path for development.

Several meetings at the U.N. showed that only planning funds are available through the U.N. They are from the United Nations Development Program (so called UNDP). The UNDP comprises two parts:

UNDP-Special Fund Component

This program is focused at pre-investment planning of major projects. Development feasibility studies, resource surveys, and preliminary plans, are the type of activities paid for by this fund. Typically these planning efforts are large – greater than $ 1,000,000 per year per project. India gets 4 to 8 such projects per year. This is a very flexible program with few requirements. Ordinarily, a training component is included in each project. And usually the projects are such that the end activity – be it a dam, a road, or water and sewers for an industrial park – provides a stimulus for regional growth.

Requests for Special Fund support may be made through the UNDP office in Delhi.

Support from this fund, however, like the other UNDP fund, cannot be obtained without participation of the Indian central Government. That is, the proposed project must be adopted and presented as one of the Central Government. This means that you would have to bring the Central Government into some kind of planning partnership with the Society. Also, you would need to convince the Government that they should spend the monies available to India on this project. And, note, there is a long list of Indian projects awaiting funding.

UNDP-Technical Assistance Program

This is a smaller fund from which the Government of India gets approximately $3,500,000 per year. There are few constraints on the-use of this money and each government can use it essentially as it wants to.

Again, the Central Government is the deciding body of how this fund is used; it is meant to support projects sanctioned by them. If they give priority to Auroville they can obtain funds for planning assistance for particular parts of Auroville, for example, for the industrial area, university, housing etc.

Current availability of funds, and steps required to obtain funding support, should be discussed with the UNDP office in Delhi.

I was led to understand that if the Central Government does elect to support the Auroville project, planning monies from this source would not be unlikely. But the monies available each year are split many ways.

Turning to development funds, there are none currently available from the U.N. as a body. I had previously learned that World Bank funds could be obtained for infrastructure development in Auroville, i.e. roads, utilities, transport. This is a new program. But, again, this would depend upon Auroville being a project sponsored in some way by the Central Government of India

It appears then, Suresh, that, being realistic, in order to obtain funds of any kind through such international- groups as the U.N., World Bank, etc., the Auroville project would need to be seen as one of the Central Government – at least one in which they are a "sponsoring agency".

The only sources of planning funds which could be obtained without the direct involvement of the Central Government are foundations such as Ford and Rockefeller. Thus, it would appear that there are two paths to obtain funds to support planning:

1. Work closely with the Central Government, so that they essentially become "co-sponsors" of Auroville.
2. Propose to foundations for planning support. (Have you had any further contact with Ford?)

Assuming that planning work had been done. Auroville would still be faced with the task of obtaining development money. Funds would still be needed for the balance of the land acquisition, for the land development, housing, initial industrial site development, commercial development, the university (possibly a special case) , etc. From where will these funds come? I have posed this question before and now I pose it again. Let me give you my current reactions to this question.

I want to preface my remarks by relating what I was told by Mr. Gerald Desmond at the United Nations. Mr. Desmond is concerned with development planning and plays a role in the UNDP. When f described the Auroville project to Mr. Desmond and asked about the availability of planning or development monies, his reactions were several fold. First, he commented favourably on the goals of Auroville. Auroville would be the culmination of many dreams beyond those of the Society. Second Mr. Desmond stressed that in order to involve the UN in any manner we would need to show a very positive role for Auroville in the economic development of the region surrounding the town. Third, positive relationships with both the Madras State and Central Governments would need to be demonstrated as a basis for any international funds. Fourth, he stressed that the Society would have to demonstrate that it was able to make an initial investment in the project, such as for land acquisition, before other development funds would be forthcoming. He summed up by saying that Auroville would need to be shown to play a direct and positive role in the economic development of the region and the town would need to proven to be economically feasible. Only then, does he feel that we could successfully go to the international community (including individual countries and private sources) for funding support. In other words, Mr, Desmond was pointing out that regardless of the ideals and the goals of Auroville, it must prove itself as economically feasible and desirable before international development money (from any source) could be expected to be forthcoming.

Mr. Desmond's reactions were similar to numerous others I have incurred. And, I see no alternative.

So, where do we go from here? If Auroville were an ordinary type of new town development, the following steps would be appropriate at this time:

1. Determine assets or capital the Society could bring to a development partnership, so as to maintain an equity position adequate for maintaining control of purpose and design.
2. Seek out a financial organization to bring in as a partner in development. This financial organization, possibly an insurance company, would be allowed to make a significant investment of its capital in land acquisition and development. This will provide for the necessary initial development functions while giving the financial organization the opportunity to obtain a fair return on its capital.
3. A large industrial organization would be sought as partner. This organization would be one that could profitably invest in a new facility Located in Auroville. This is not intended to say that Auroville would become a company town, but that an initial significant base of employment would be provided by this partner organization.
4. Then, the hypothetical Auroville Development Corporation would be in position to acquire land and to develop it. The corporation would develop the infrastructure, some commercial sites, an initial industrial park, initial housing, and such. A system approach would still be appropriate for planning and construction.

5. Outside investment would be sought further to further develop commerce and industry and provide for construction of purchase and rental housing.
6. The Government would be brought in to provide what it can – schools, training institutions, social programs, etc.

In this manner, by organizing a development corporation and bringing into it the other organizations with the necessary strength to do the land acquisition and development, the Auroville project could proceed as a standard economic development program. All this assumes that Auroville were an ordinary type of new town development - which, of source, it is not. But, may be middle ground position can be found.

From the above several paragraphs, Suresh, it would appear that Auroville is in a very difficult position. And, I am sure that this comes as no surprise. On the one hand, to obtain international support either of planning or development, the Society would need to bring the Central- Government into some kind of partnership, thereby subjecting Auroville to all the pressures that such a partnership implies. On the other hand, to obtain development funds, so necessary and currently so lacking, it is possible that a partnership with a financial group and an industrial group would be necessary. And, this raises serious questions of another kind. What conflict would there be between the goals of Auroville and the goals of any partnership? Possibly, however, you could find partners for a development corporation who will share the ideals of Auroville – or at least, would not force development in a manner that would compromise these ideals. And, note, that even if you were to go into a partnership with the Central Government, you would still be in need of initial development money far beyond those provided by the World Bank or other international groups. And, again, you would be forced to look towards financial or industrial groups for funding support.

Suresh, let me suggest the following sequence of activities:

1. The Society should again consider the relationship you want to have with the Central Government of India. That is, is the Society prepared to bring the Central Government into a partnership in developing Auroville? If not, the Society is effectively blocked from utilising any U.N. or World Bank funds.
2. Assuming that the Society will want to retain autonomy from the central Government, I suggest that a careful examination of economic feasibility be made. I am not an economist, but economic feasibility in this case implies to me that:
    a. Auroville can produce a range of products for which markets exist, both nationally and internationally. (Your ferrite plant experience demonstrates that positive answers can be found here).
    b. Access to raw materials for the production of these products and access to the markets are feasible, considering the transportation available from Auroville by land and water.
    c. There is sufficient industry in the vicinity of Auroville to supply needed parts and materials and other supporting production to Auroville industries.
    d. A work force is available to the Auroville industry, and it can be trained to perform the necessary technological functions.
3. Examine the potential conflict between the requirements of economic feasibility and the purposes of Auroville. Is it likely the development of people will be sacrificed to the development of capital? Or, can it be seen clearly, that men will be able to live a life that will allow them to develop their inner selves while still meeting the demands of the economy?
4. Assuming that you can see your way clear to retain the purposes of Auroville while also achieving economic feasibility, then I would suggest that you take initial steps to try to put together a development corporation – the line of the steps outlined above. I suggest that you seek a financial member or members, and consider what we previously discussed, namely the creation of stock (non-voting) as a means for achieving capitalization. Also, you should seek an industrial member. Preferably an Indian firm or an Indian subsidiary of an international firm. The questions here are:

Can compatible partners be found, and can adequate safeguards for Auroville's purposes be built into the development corporation agreements?

If the fourth step works out, i.e. if you can put together the development corporation partners in a manner that is compatible with the development goals of Auroville, then you are in a position to move out. The role for the Indian Government will be that which we have previously discussed, i.e. providing subsidies to various training and social programs. Other national governments could also be approached for participation, as you had previously planned. Avoided has been the need for outside financial help for planning – such as that given by a foundation.

I recognize that in all I have written here, Suresh, the notion of compromise comes back and back. I don't see any way around some compromise at this point if Auroville is to be built. The question is what compromise can be made in the development of Auroville? And, I want to express my concern for the possibility of compromise, for I understand how firmly committed you and others of the Society are to the pure ideals of Auroville. But, I would be dishonest if I did not point out my feeling that the realities of development financing require some manner of partnership, either with the Central Government or with some industrial and financial organizations.

Suresh, I look forward to your reactions to this letter. Again, my tardiness in writing notwithstanding, let me remind you that I stand ready to help you and Auroville in any way I can.

Sincerely,

Sidney I. Firstman

Intercorporate Director
for Urban Systems Analysis

* * *

1969, December 29th: *Letter from Suresh Hindocha to André Morisset:*
AV Archives (Hindocha file)
English

Dear André

I am enclosing a copy of a letter from Dr. S. I. Firstman of Planning of Planning Research Corporation, which I believe to be very important for Auroville. A summary of this letter was shown to the Mother and Her comments were as follows:

i. No compromise. Auroville must remain autonomous in order to transform the old order into a new order of harmony and good will.

ii. It is better for Auroville to be self-sufficient than to rely on conditional financial aid which may be sporadic in nature. What Auroville needs is continuous progress.

iii. However any aid given to Auroville out of sheer good will of any institution or government will be welcomed because it stems from good will for Auroville.

The above is not exactly what the Mother had said but it s what have understood from my father when he saw the Mother.

I am looking forward to your reactions, suggestions and any other comments regarding Dr. Firstman's letter.

Meanwhile I take this opportunity to wish you a very happy new year and more.

Sincerely

Suresh Hindocha

* * *

1970, January 5th: *Letter from André Morisset to Suresh Hindocha:*

AV Archives (Hindocha file)
English

Dear Suresh,

I have read with great which interest Firstman's letter which was included in yours of the 29th December.

There is no doubt that he has well understood the Auroville problem but he still considers that the development of Auroville has to follow a similar pattern to that of other cities. He thinks that planning and financing must be secured before actual work is started on the site. Hence the necessity of compromise which comes again and again in his Letter.

The two points which seem to me to be quite true in his views are:

1. Nothing can be started without the agreement, at least tacit, of the Central Government and of the Governments of Madras and Pondicherry.
2. An organisation has to handle financial matters with the scope of showing how Auroville is to be self sufficient. This organisation has to be international and different from the Sri Aurobindo Society.

As regards point 1, the present situation seems favourable inasmuch as the Central Government and the Pondicherry Government are the prepared to help, and the Madras Government is more or less neutral. There is some likelihood that financial help can be secured through international agencies for particular projects which can at once be needed by Auroville and useful to India. For instance the television and satellite programme and soma parts of the International University.

As regards point 2, the founding of Auroville International is aimed. at fulfilling the scope. It ought to unite the good will existing in various countries and generate more of it. It ought to overcome the danger of compromise as it is foreseen by Firstman.

And everything to be coordinated by Mother...

Sincerely

André

* * *

1970, May 7h: *Letter from Sidney Firstman to Suresh and Harish Hindocha:*

AV Archives (Hindocha file)
English

Dear Suresh and Harish,

A letter from Harish arrived – I found it waiting upon my return from a business a trip. In it, Harish tells that you, Suresh, have been ill with a kidney ailment recently. I know there can be particularly disabling experiences. I sincerely hope you have recovered and are now feeling your normal self again.

Harish's letter also described the prevailing organizational thought. I perceived the situation of a few wanting a purposeful and focused development, path, expressed in a program and organization, and others, the majority, who wants to allow the development of Auroville to occur as it will. I find my thinking at this time to be somewhere between the two. Let me share it with you.

There are several ways to introduce my most recent line of thinking. And, in fact, I came to my conclusions after various starts. Let me tell you about three of them.

While reading the letters that you, Suresh, had sent to me from Julie Medlock and André Morisset, I was impressed with the thought that perhaps I had been too mechanistic or too goal-directed without a proper spirit of purpose and emotion that overcomes obstacles. Further I felt that perhaps I was being too time-table oriented in wanting to develop Auroville in 5 to 10 years, while I find Miss Medlock speaking of 50 to 100 years as the possible time table. And, André in his gentlemanly manner observed that I am too much wedded to the development path of the west. I was and in fact still am, wedded to the development paths of the west, but Auroville is not of the west. Therefore, I began to rethink my previous positions concerning the development of Auroville.

At the same time, reacting to your letter, Suresh, I began to realize that we need a planning and development approach that is consistent with the current reality of Auroville.[1] That is, Auroville does not have funds to acquire all needed land or to develop the land or to a sustained professional staff. Moreover, Auroville is really involved with developing the area within and near the town, and not just the town itself.

Several days later, while on my trip in the midwestern part of the U.S., I was eating dinner and reading the most recent issue of Equals One. I was impressed by a curious and most significant dichotomy:

On one hand, there is the city envisioned of Equals One; one which is very carefully planned in great detail. A city based on and utilizing the most modern of technologies. This is very much the town conceived by Roger and his group of architects and planners. It is the one presented by Roger in his preliminary concept for Auroville.

I was impressed for example with the definiteness with which the writers of Equals One state on page 17, "all the residents will be connected with the most modern means of communication (walkie-talkie, videophone, closed circuit television, etc). These, do not constitute luxury items but the nervous system of the society". It struck me that may be the Aurovilians, as they begin to live the life of Auroville, won't want this type of open intrusion into their selves.

Then I read further on page 17, "No child will be obliged to live with his own family. He may choose second or third families dividing his week or month or year among them". I was impressed that this manner of child rearing implies very much concerning the sophistication of the residents of Auroville and their personal life styles and values. It also has implications on the housing and design of Auroville.

I asked myself, is a city planned in such careful detail – physical and social – necessary for the goals of Auroville? Is the city of Roger's preliminary concept necessary to achieve these goals?

Continuing further from the same page of Equals One, I read "this society Sri Aurobindo has called "human unity" but one may also call it a planetary or laser society. One thing is certain: It represents a state of consciousness which cannot be obtained by external rules or even by a single great inner leap. It will be the result of a common, conscious and voluntary experience, a total education which will be synonymous of evolution itself. The community gathered up into Auroville would generate the education of change that way of learning which is conscious transformation.

Auroville will not be a society organized by powers external to itself, with a money economy, administrative regulations, or a constitution. It will be based on a power inherent in each human being, but not rarely activated: The power to fulfil oneself within this society not against others, but with others."

Perhaps, I asked myself, a "place of unending education, of constant progress…" should also be a place that evolves, as an expression of the developing people who live there.

The three sets of thoughts support one another. My resulting thoughts Suresh and Harish are these, simply stated: Auroville should not be planned all at once. It should be allowed to evolve, expressing the people. And in this evolution, adopt what technology, what physical forms, and what facilities it wants to express the life-style that evolves in the living experiment.

Thus, though I may have been in too much of a hurry to develop Auroville in say 5 to 10 years, and too much oriented to western development approaches, I feel that at least some in Auroville have been too much concerned with determining the complete nature and physical form of Auroville. We are both of us wrong.

Consider the following. Instead of preparing and following a town plan or master plan for development, we establish an adaptive development strategy. The basic elements of this adaptive development strategy are that annually, at least, and semi-annually if possible, a committee of Aurovilians carry out a planning and re-planning activity along the following lines:

Goals – set by the people of Auroville. What do we want? How do we want to live? What is important to us? What do we want, to express?

[1] Underlining is by Firstman.

Current Status – assessment of where Auroville is with respect to its goals.

Next step objectives (5 year horizon) – what does Auroville want to do next? From where we are, what will maximize our overall goals achievement – what projects? What facilities? What activities?

Possibilities – what options are realistically open? What funds are available? What projects have been offered – UNESCO, Madras, India, private organizations? What talents are available in Auroville?

Action Program – from the possibilities, selects those that are to be pursued within the ability of Auroville (funds, people, land, etc) to best achieve the next step objectives.

Action Plan – expresses the 5 year program in development plans: Physical structures, infrastructure, social program, etc.

This planning process is adaptive in that every 6 months or so the goals are re-examined, as is the assessment of current status. Next step objectives are periodically, re-assessed, etc.

Several observations concerning this approach; (1) this provides structure for development without having a rigid plan. As I said before, I am not sure that one can plan, nor should one plan.

Auroville. Auroville should be an expression of Auroville.[2] (2) To be consistent with the evolutionary nature of Auroville, expressing Auroville, this structure for development should be worked out in Auroville by Aurovilians. It cannot be prepared for Auroville in Los Angeles. (3) Professional competence (civil engineering, transport, planning, etc) will be needed to assist in expressing the goals and objectives in physical structures and other elements of an action program. But the planning is an expression of Auroville and not that of a "planning organisation" or of a "development organisation". (4) This approach does not deny the development of Auroville as a system, but it expresses the system of Auroville in an evolving, dynamic manner. (5) this approach is consistent with the current economic reality of Auroville. That is it does not require all-at-once acquisition of land or financing of infrastructure development. It does not require that Auroville go now to outside sources of funding or know exactly what development is to occur over time as a basis of acquiring outside funding.

I should point out that this approach provides all the opportunity in the world for Auroville not to happen. It provides opportunity for responsibilities to be avoided and for things to be put off. However, to my mind, it provides the only possible approach to the development of a true Auroville.

Thus, I feel we should find some way to allow Auroville to develop as an expression of itself… We must provide mechanisms that will assure the movement of this development.

I can conceive of the current organizational structure implementing the development strategy. In fact, this approach in many ways parallels what is currently happening. But, I feel that there must be definite organizational steps taken and planned to implement such a development strategy approach. That is, though it is to evolve, I think that the planning of Auroville should not be left to chances or to loose discussions. It must be made a matter of purposeful thought and purposeful expression.[3]

So, my friends, my current thinking lies somewhere between the need for hard planning and sequence development, sought by some there and certainly posed in my previous letters and suggestions to you, and the rather loosely structured, but largely unproductive approach that appears to have occurred in the 18 months or so since our Paris meeting. Now, I feel that Auroville should not be planned nor should it be scheduled, at least not beyond the next step objectives as seen at that time. But, on the other hand, I realise that to leave everything to happen as an expression, means that for most part nothing will happen.

I have given some thought, but, not too much, to the steps to implement such an adaptive development approach – a structure for planning is needed as is an organizational mechanism. But, I hesitate to even express them. For, once one a accepts the adaptive strategy approach, and accepts this as a means for Auroville to express itself in physical and political, and social form, then one must leave the

[2] Underlining by Firstman.

[3] Underlining by Firstman.

particularization of this approach to Auroville. That is, I think the working outs of details of the approach should be done in Auroville by Aurovilians.

I have considered some of the development consequences of this approach. That is, are we looking; toward incompatible land uses? Will we have adequate water, sewers and powers to meet the needs of Auroville? Will the university and industry ever really come to be? I feel, that we can look towards the integrated development of Auroville with encouragement. Perhaps some mistakes will be made, but we -can guard against major mistakes by annually or semi-annually expressing the goals and next-step plan in a general land-use plan. One that assures land-use compatibility while identifying the land that must be acquired next (hopefully at controlled rate with the cooperation of the Madras State). Moreover, careful expression of the near term objectives will show the need for infrastructure and other town elements. And, these would become the town needs – the physical realities that must precede achievement of the other objectives and goals. What I am saying is that I feel we can build the appropriate engineering and other technological planning statements into the expression of Auroville on an incremental basis.

Well, my friends, there is much more than I can say concerning both the suggested approach and my reasons for proposing it. You must have sensed that I am excited by the concepts – though straight forward I feel they are unique and potentially productive. But let me close at this point and wait your reactions to what I have written.

Sincerely,

Sd/-

Sidney I. Firstman

Intercorporate Director
for Urban Systems Analysis

* * *