



MAKING CHANGE: LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM PLANNING

Change Theory, Local Food System Tools,
and applying change theory.

Dr. Rob Buchan, FCIP, PhD.

Presentation Overview

- o 1) Overview of Transformative Incrementalism: a change theory
- o 2) Overview of Local Food System Tools and Planning Roles
- o 3) Applying TI, Local Food System Planning and Change in Prince Rupert

Overview of Transformative Incrementalism: A Planning Change Theory

- Readings will be listed

Development of Transformative Incrementalism

Developed 2014 to 2018 during Doctoral research program

Method:

Classic Grounded Theory

Goal:

To understand “what was going on” in local food system planning.

Purpose:

To advance theoretical understanding and insight into food system planning processes.

Need for Change?

- o **Are things good as they are now?**
 - o Ocean acidification
 - o Ocean dead zones
 - o Fish stock collapses
 - o Climate change
 - o Aquifer depletion
 - o Ice cap loss
 - o Sea level rise
 - o Watershed degradation
 - o Drought
 - o Wildfires
 - o Sprawl
 - o Health

Power in Planning Literature

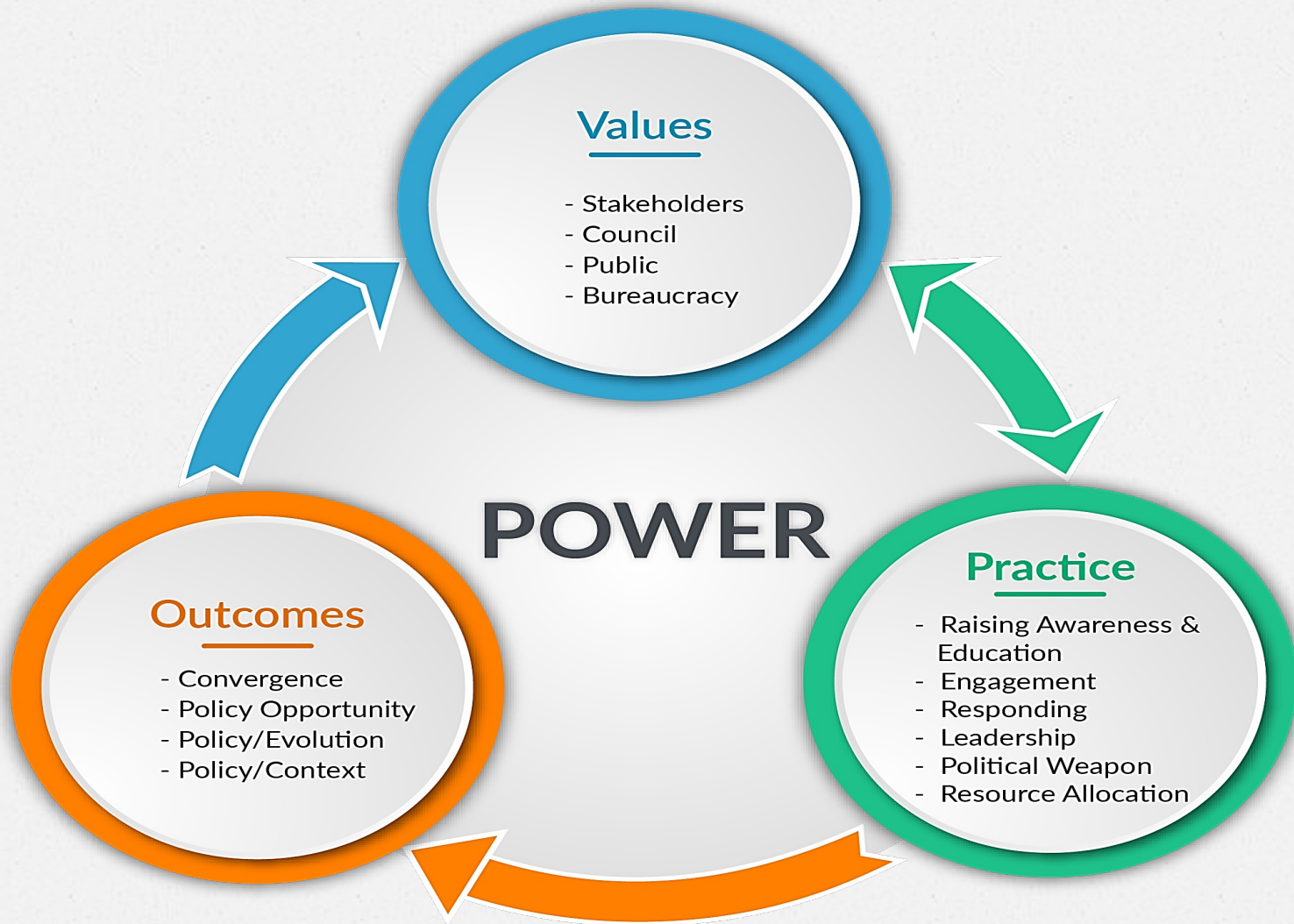
- Friedman suggests that perhaps “the biggest problem we face in theorizing planning is our ambivalence about power. The rational planning paradigm studiously avoided talking about any form of power other than the power of the mind...The main literatures on power...have all been imported from outside our field” (2011 p137). Friedman urges theoreticians to build relations of power, especially enabling power, into our conceptual frameworks.

Transformative Incrementalism

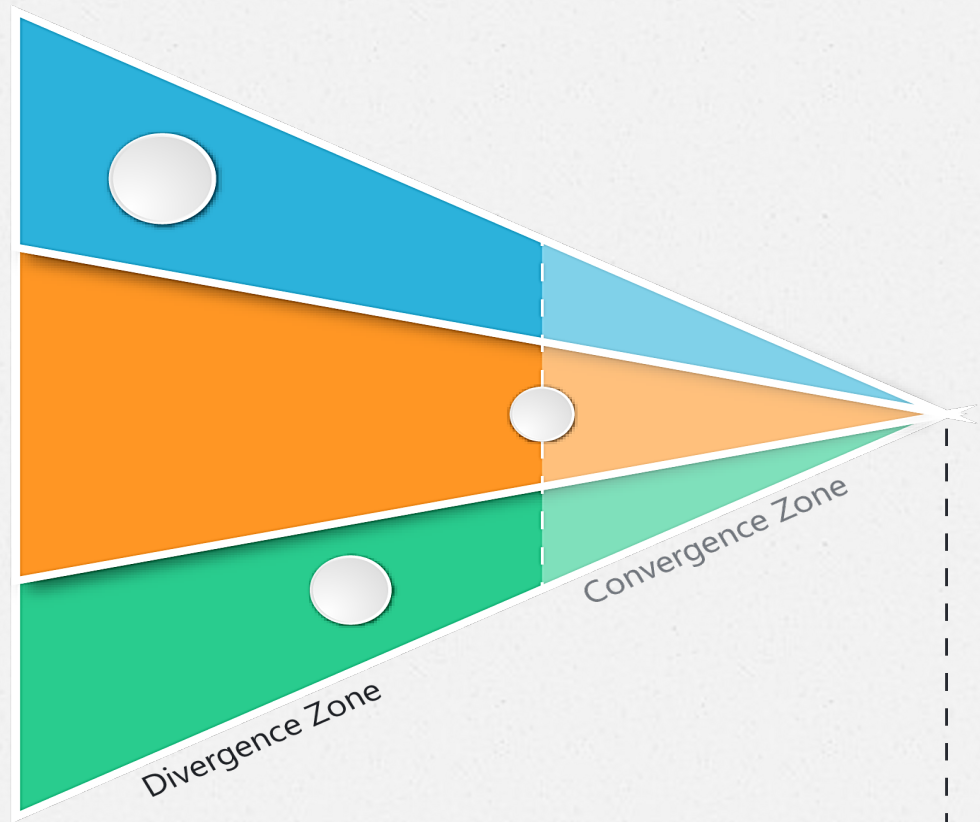
- o TI is a theory that describes the change process outside a time of crisis
- o The process is about building and maintaining support for change
 - o Social process
 - o Slow, incremental, and recursive
 - o Power is non-centralized and drives change
 - o Concerned with developing and using influence

The TI categories and process

- o **Key Categories** (variables)
 - o Power, values, practice and outcomes
- o **Process**
 - o Transformative change is a power-driven process with players working towards building a broad convergence of values that support change initiatives
 - o Supportive values develop from successful practice and positive results (outcomes)
 - o Change is a slow process. It is recursive, incremental, non-linear change process driven by efforts to influence others to agree with, support and drive change.
- o Power is the core variable.



POLITICAL
PUBLIC
BUREAUCRACY

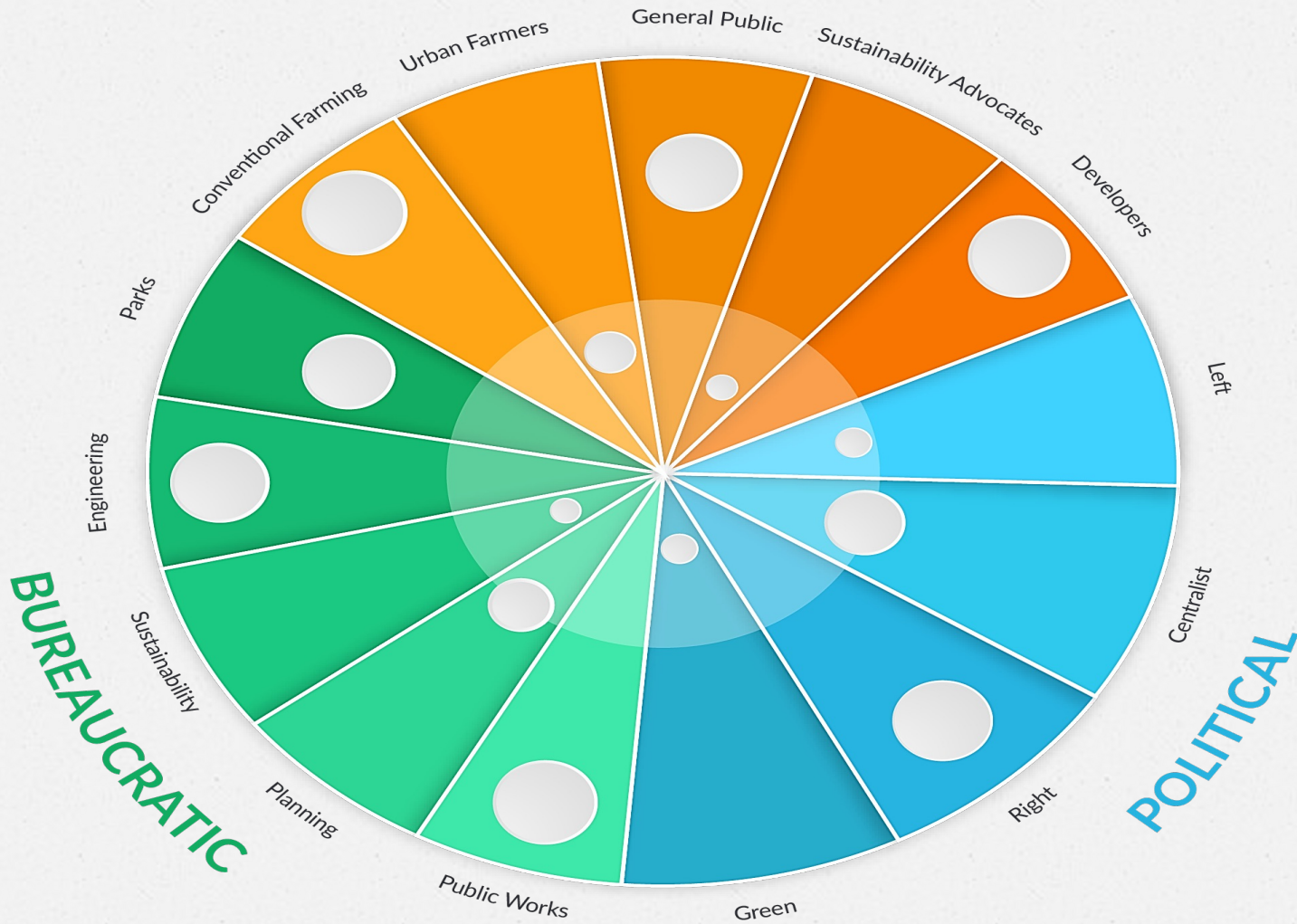


- Ad-hoc Projects
- Disjointed Efforts
- Undeveloped Policy



- Comprehensive Strategy
- Dedicated Resources
- Well Developed Policy and Programs

PUBLIC



Inner Circle- Convergence (Agreement)

Outer Circle- Divergence (Disagreement)

Planner's Role: Westminster Model

The Westminster system is a democratic parliamentary system of government in which the public servant is anonymous and neutral,

or

Transformative Incremental Model



Overview of Local Food System Tools and Planning Roles

Food System Issues

- Diminishing water
- Climate Change
- Production Agriculture Issues
- Public Health
- Global Demographics
- Food shortages/access issues
- A convergence

How Do We Change Our Food Systems?

Planning Tools and Roles:

1. Provide resources
2. Undertake programs and projects
3. Advocate/educate
4. Regulate

Planning Tools: Provide Resources Category

- o Rent subsidies [for land or facilities]
- o Provide land for community gardens and other urban agriculture
- o Food Hubs
- o Farmers Markets
- o Food Access initiatives

(see article for literature references)

Planning Tools:
Undertake Projects and
Programs Category

- o Community Gardens
- o Agricultural Development Commissions or Agricultural Advisory Committees
- o Food Waste recovery and composting
- o Demonstration Gardens
- o Municipal Food Department

Planning Tools: Advocate and Facilitate Category

- o Roof top gardens
- o Education and Promotion
- o Municipal Agricultural web site
- o Development of a Local Food market
- o Agri-tourism development
- o Food access considerations [grocery stores food hubs community gardens farmer markets] in neighbourhood and community plans
- o Good Food Box programs
- o Community Supported Agriculture
- o Edible School Gardens
- o Vertical Gardening [enabled by zoning bylaw but encouraged as a voluntary use or secured through a density bonussing bylaw
- o Back Yard Aquaculture
- o Food stores in urban food deserts
- o Farmers Markets [in this case encouraged and facilitated but not funded]

Planning Tools:

Regulate and Establish Policy Category

- o Zoning/land use bylaws [enables local food production by permitting uses]
- o Density Bonus bylaws [a form of zoning bylaw that gives density for an amenity defined by the community]
- o Development Permit Areas and Guidelines [to integrate edible landscaping in multifamily residential commercial and industrial land developments]
- o Food Security Bylaw
- o Food Security Assessments and Strategies
- o Food and Agriculture Strategies
- o Agricultural Economic Development Strategies
- o Food Procurement Policies
- o Business License Bylaws [for selling produce]
- o Farm friendly sign bylaws
- o Consult with knowledgeable people during plan and policy research
- o Farmland Preservation
- o Comprehensive Plans [Official Plans Agricultural Area Plans Neighbourhood Plans]
- o Food System mapping/community food assessments
- o Tax Break/Incentive bylaws [this could be used for food system infrastructure such as abattoirs or other food system elements missing from the community]

Applying TI

- o Applying TI should be guided by a process that is informed by the key variables. Accordingly, I suggest five process steps:
- o 1) Assessing the policy environment;
- o 2) Assessing the divergence/convergence of values in the key participant groups;
- o 3) Assessing the power context;
- o 4) Developing a long-term engagement (advocacy, education, encouragement) strategy; and
- o 5) Developing an incremental progress strategy (ie., repeating steps 1 to 4

P. Rupert Food System Planning

1) Assessed Policy Environment

- o No pre-existing productionist farming
- o Traditional First Nations food system
- o No existing food policy
- o Previous policy issue on urban chickens
- o Limited resources and urgent demands
- o Opportunity for policy

2) Assessed Values

- o A few local urban growers
- o One resident champion
- o Progressive Mayor and Council
- o Senior Management opposition
- o Some public concern with Rat attraction from chickens
- o NGO Ecotrust Canada promoting local food discussion/policy

3) Assessed Power Context

- o What is the influence of the champion
- o What is the influence of the NGO (Ecotrust Canada)
- o Is there deep-rooted Public opposition
- o Influence of Council over staff and support within staff

P. Rupert Food System Planning

4) Long Term Engagement Strategy

- o Act on OCP opportunity and begin policy work with OCP
- o Facilitate NGO projects to build awareness and support
- o Include Food system planning in Strategic Plan
- o Undertake Local Food System Strategy when funding is available
- o Ensure Local Food System Strategy includes short medium- and long-term actions and engagement
- o Ensure Local Food System Strategy includes monitoring, and updates. This should include community and stakeholder values, concerns (challenges).

5) Incremental Progress Strategy

This means taking a work plan approach that repeats steps 1 to 4 until bold change initiatives have achieved the transformative change desired.

Reading

- o BUCHAN R., 2023, (Publication Pending) Transformative Incrementalism: Reflections on TI in Professional Practice, in Future Food Systems: Exploring Global Production, Processing, Distribution and Consumption. , Elsevier
- o BUCHAN R., 2023, (Publication Pending) *Community Development: Navigating the Rocky Shoals of Community Change* in The Role of Canadian City Managers: In their own Words, University of Toronto Press.
- o BUCHAN R., 2021, *Transformative Incrementalism: Implications for Transformative Planning Practice*, in Dialogues in Urban and Regional Planning, 7, “Transformative Planning: Smarter, Greener and More Inclusive Practices” , Taylor and Francis
- o BUCHAN R., 2019, TRANSFORMATIVE INCREMENTALISM: A journey to sustainability, Editor, Municipal World
- o BUCHAN R., Cloutier D., & Friedman A. 2018, *Transformative Incrementalism: Planning for transformative change in local food systems*. Progress in Planning
- o BUCHAN R., 2017, *Power: That-Which-Must-Not-Be-Named*. Plan Canada. Winter, Vol 57. No 4
- o BUCHAN R., Cloutier D., Friedman A.,& Ostry A. 2015, *Local Food System Planning: The Problem, Conceptual Issues, and Policy Tools for Local Government Planners* The Canadian Journal of Urban Research, Vol 24, Issue 1, Summer 2015.

Questions



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