



URP-220
Undergraduate Course
on

Planning Process

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Lecture notes#2

Characteristics and Steps of Strategic/Action Planning.

1- Main characteristics of strategic planning

A paper-print of chapter-7 by Denhardt (1991) will be given to you during the lecture.

(See: Denhardt, Robert B., 1991, Public Administration: An Action Orientation, Chapter-7, on Planning Implementation and Evaluation, Brooks/Col Publishing co, California, USA)

The following points (1-1 to 1-5) are summary of what are mentioned by Denhardt (1991) on the definitions of: strategy, strategic planning, and its steps (for public administration), including the cited authors.

1-1 What is the strategy?

- Designing today's actions to enable us to face the future on our own terms, not on those imposed from the outside. (Denhardt, 1991)
- What shall we do today to get ready for tomorrow? (Drucker, 1974).

1-2 What is strategic planning?

- It is a plan that is unified (ties all the parts together), comprehensive (covers all aspects) and integrated (all parts are compatible with one another and fit together well). (William Glueck, 1980, p.9).
- Strategy defines (1) the relationship of the total organization to its environment, and (2) gives guidance to administrative and operational activities on the ongoing basis. (Robert Shirley, 1982, p. 262).



1-3 The difference between strategic and long range planning.

- Planning under uncertainty versus planning based on solid information.
- Planning for public interests (everybody are concerned in the likely democratic way) versus planning for private interests (interests or payoffs for the owners or the top administrations).

1-4 Organization for planning (key actors, constituent members or representatives).

E.g., central planning group, consultants, local community, political leaders, representatives of: city administration, industry, business, labor, members of the neighborhood associations (CBOs, NGOs), etc.

1-5 Steps of strategic planning (for public administration)

- Statement of mission.
- Environmental analysis.
- Strengths and weaknesses.
- Values of the organizational leaders/decision makers.
- Development of alternative strategies.

2- Characteristics of action planning

Contrary to the case of traditional planning, the key actors are involved in all phases of the dynamic planning process, e.g., strategic or action planning. Baross (1990) mentioned the following characteristics of strategic/action planning.

- Legitimacy (to solve real public problems)
- Constituency (must involve all key actors)
- Territorial (to study all aspects related to the real public problem)
- Resources (oriented)
- Innovation (apply new but promising ideas)
- Implementation (oriented)
- Learning by doing (feedbacks will improve the outputs and outcomes)

(See, Baross, Pal, 1990, Action Planning, Institute of Housing Studies-IHS, Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands, Working Paper); Download the paper using the following link:

http://www.ihs.nl/fileadmin/ASSETS/ihs/IHS_Publication/IHS_Working_Paper/IHS_WP_002_Action_Planning_1991.pdf



3- Steps of the strategic/action planning (for urban/physical planners)

3-1 List of main steps (the rapid way).

- Problem Identification (only public problems and not political slogans)
- Environmental/Context analysis (covering all aspects/literatures)
- Setting goals and objectives (only live goals/objectives that everyone knows them).
- Identification of weakness, strengths, and opportunities.
- Formulations of policies, projects and programs.
- Setting priorities, and operationalization for implementation.

3-2 The extended list (the long way, with parallel activities):

- Data collection, including physical and socio-economic surveys, and updates of maps and information.
- Quantitative and qualitative analyses.
- Review of previous planning projects: what have been implemented? And what are the likely negative/positive outcomes of implementation?
- Problems identification (only the public problems).
- Context/environmental analysis.
- Setting goals and objectives; and formulating the strategic directives, vision and/or statement of mission.
- Reviewing the likely replicable best practices from around the world, or from old local experiences.
- Proposing alternative planning concepts: minimum, moderate, and/or complete change/intervention (in terms of cost and time).
- Setting indicators for evaluating the concepts (outputs and outcomes).
- Defining the weakness, strengthens and opportunities.
- Formulating policies, action-projects and financial/administrative programs: emergent, short-term, medium-term, and long-term (could be put in matrixes).
- Reckoning the costs/profits/benefits/payoffs of projects and programs.
- Prioritization and operationlization of projects and programs of actions; produce time schedule for planning and implementation (in-jump/incremental development scenarios).



4- Goals and Aims of the planning projects.

Goals and Aims are the same thing and meant the outcome after implementation and use.

Task: to describe the likely outcomes of the planning project after implementation (some call it the vision).

5- Objectives.

The criteria of formulating the planning objectives by Davidson (1992)

- Specific in terms of time.
- Specific in place, and to the target group.
- Could be measured quantitatively.
- Likely to achieve any benefit in any field.
- Could be implemented within the time limits.
- Could be implemented using (only) the available resources.
- Do not contradict the local legislations.
- Do not contradict the interests of the key actors.

(See: Davidson, F., 1992, Integrated Action Planning, Setting Objectives, IHS, Rotterdam, p. 2)

Read also the article of Angel (1983) that pinpoints the difference between live-objective and dead-objective. The live-objective is what was agreed upon by all key-actors.

(Angel, s., 1983, Upgrading Slum Infrastructure Divergent Objectives in Search of a Consensus, Third World Planning Review, Vol.5, No. 1, 5-22).

6- Methodology.

It is the array of sequential steps that planners would follow to produce the out-put of the planning process, and might also include the types of theories, methods and literatures used in the planning process.

Task: to describe the planning steps and theories used in the planning process in order to produce its soft outputs, in the form of executive summary report. It also includes the descriptions of the soft outputs of the planning project under consideration: e.g., land use map shows such and such, chapter on the housing market that shows such



and such, chapter on social services, map of the proposed structure-plan, and maps of the road and infrastructure networks, etc.

7- The planning team of key actors.

- The community of residents: tenants, owners of houses, land lords, etc.
- Merchandisers and craftsmen, and those who work for them.
- Nongovernmental organizations-NGOs and community based organizations-CBOs.
- Technical consultants: planners, urban designers, architects, civil, electrical, and mechanical engineers, etc.
- Developers, entrepreneurs, investors, contractors, etc.
- Representatives of local government or some of its concerned departments.
- Agencies of infrastructure, roads and transit systems and social services.
- Politicians, intellectuals, artist, journalists, etc.
- Representatives of the concerned ministries from central government.
- International development organizations (United Nations, World Bank, etc.).
- Other concerned key-actors, professors from universities and research institutes, etc.

Additional readings:

1- Kaufman, Jerome L.; Jacobs, Harvey M., 1987, A Public Planning Perspective on Strategic Planning, APA Journal, pp23-33.

<http://urpl.wisc.edu/people/jacobs/jacobs%20publications/Kaufman%20&%20Jacobs%20-%201987%20-%20Strategic%20Planning%20-%20JAPA.pdf>

2- Aboufotouh, Hossam, Strategic Planning, Urban Management Course, OUDA, 1998, (In Arabic)

<http://www.geocities.ws/fotouh28/Aboufotouh-UM-Strategic-Planning.pdf>