Types of Regional Planning

1. Short-term and Long-term: From the temporal point of view planning can be short term or long term. Short term planning is designed to solve certain pressing problems which do not require large-scale changes in the social and economic order. It may be used to increase production and employment opportunities; to adjust production to market demand and supply, and to meet the targets set by long-term plans.

*Conceptualization of short-term and long-range planning refers to the temporal life span of the planning process. If the planning is done under some exigencies, it may have only short-term objectives to achieve and hence may be termed as such. If the planning is futuristic, it may have long range objective to achieve and may be termed as long-term planning.*

Long-term planning, sometimes erroneously called perspective planning, on the other hand, aims at the institutional and structural changes necessary for achieving the long term social and economic goals of the society.

2. Economic and Developmental: from the point of view of programme content, planning can be economic or developmental. The former is suited to developed economies like those of the western countries, where the social capital and infrastructure for the necessary quantitative expansion and structural adjustment of the economy are already in
existence. Development planning is used in developing countries, where necessary bases for economic expansion are either too weak or non-existent. Development planning is more comprehensive and is designed to generate structural changes in the society in order to facilitate the growth of the national economy. It includes social planning.

3. Imperative and Indicative Planning: from the organizational angle, planning can be imperative or indicative. Under imperative planning, economic decisions are made through a central planning authority instead of a market system. Allocation of resources, the mix of output and the distribution of output among the people (i.e., ‘What, How and for whom’ problems) are determined centrally in accordance with the predetermined plans and targets. Because of control over the available resources of the country by the state, resources are allocated in such a way that production becomes maximum, people get goods and services in fixed quantities at fixed prices, and welfare of the nation gets maximized.

Under imperative planning, there is the absence of institutions of private property, competition and profit motive of industrialists, etc. It is because of the absence of these institutions and the presence of the state in directing and regulating economic activities, the planning authority formulates and implements plans in the best interests of the country.

In reality, such type of planning does not exist. Although some people say that imperative planning was in operation like the erst-while USSR and Eastern Europe and China till mid-1980s.
Indicative planning or planning by inducement is found in capitalist countries as well as in mixed economies, like India. The essence of indicative planning is that it recognizes not only consumers’ sovereignty but also producers’ freedom so that the targets and priorities of the plans are achieved. It then involves a middle path of planning mechanism and market mechanism—a kind of coordination between private and public activities.

Under indicative planning those industries and sectors are identified where future growth is to be encouraged. Its endavour will be to develop the core sector through allocation and optimal utilization of funds. The plan must provide the broad blueprint for achieving the essential social and economic objectives and indicate the direction in which the entire economy as well as its various sectors and sub-sectors should be moving.

4. Normative and System: Planning process can be considered to be normative or “system”. Normative planning enjoins upon planner a search for the best possible results in relation to established goals. There is less emphasis on the social and institutional dimensions of planning. This approach examines five groups of problems:

a. the procedure for defining goals and objectives,

b. the phasing of plan and defining of sequence and linkages,

c. linking and integrating sectoral and functional elements of the plan,

d. linking and integrating territorial plans, and

e. determining the contribution that specialists can make and the coordination of their activities.

Physical planning comes within the purview of the normative approach. Here the planner is essentially expert, analyst,
surveyor, model maker, and operator. He is less concerned with what happens to the plan if the environment in which it is implemented is hostile.

The system approach treats planning as a social process operating in varying and varied socio-technical contexts. The planning system is considered to be a structure formed by values, goals, roles, factors, organizations and their clients, rules, norms, regulations, the relationship between individual and collective participants of planning.

The elements of systems planning are:

a. values, goals, and ideologies,

b. the concrete tasks which are to be undertaken by planning,

c. the carrying out of the developmental tasks,

d. the organizational units by which the developmental tasks are realized,

e. the actors and the professionals participating in planning,

f. the roles of the actors and
g. norms regulating the relations between individual participant (actors) and between organizational unit.

The two approaches are, however, complementary rather than contradictory. A plan is the by-product of the interaction among different actors- a communication process among them.

5. Sectoral and Spatial: Sectoral planning, the form of planning most commonly adopted today is essentially special purpose planning, designed to develop the various sectors of
the economy such as agriculture, industry, transportation, power, etc., either individually or simultaneously. Targets for each sector are fixed, taking into account the availability of physical and socio-economic resources (including external assistance), the future demand for goods resulting from population growth, increased income, demand elasticities and exports. Attempts are made to match the inter-sectoral targets, but it is rarely that an integrated plan is evolved.

The term spatial planning has been used to convey that the planning activity is concerned with reorganization of space. Town planning, country planning, area planning and regional planning are all various expressions of spatial planning each restricting its sphere of action to a specific spatial expression.

6. **Single Level and Multi Level Planning:** In the single-level planning, the formulation of plans and decision making are done at the national level; the process is centralized and the lower territorial levels come into the picture only at the implementation stage. Plans are formulated and structured by Niti Ayog/Planning Commission.

Multi-level planning process, the national territory is divided into small territorial units, their number depending upon the size of the country, the administrative, and the geographical and cultural settings.

In such plans, there is direct participation of the people in the planning process. In multi-level planning, every region/unit constitutes a system and hence, the planning process becomes more effective.