



SCENARIO THINKING FOR STRATEGIC URBAN DEVELOPMENT

How public value conflicts are mitigated in municipal strategic urban development processes

Analysing the case of the Feyenoord City Project

(Mlefter, 2012)



de Volkskrant



CASE

Housing crisis

The tightness on the Dutch housing market continues to grow, and solutions are not in sight. Follow the latest news about the housing crisis [here](#).





H
The tightn
continues to
Follow the l



(European Commission, 2021)

(de Volkskrant, 2025)



de Volkskrant



H
The tightn
continues to
Follow the l



(Ramos, 2021)

(European Commission, 2021)

(de Volkskrant, 2025)



Council of State again shreds Rotterdam problem plan

In News 12:57, 03 November 2022 By Robert Paling

To develop Homes



(Paling, 2022)



(Ligtenberg, 2025)



FEYENOORD CITY

There will be housing, but no stadium in Feyenoord City for the time being

Rotterdam politicians want to continue with housing construction around Feyenoord City, even if the new stadium on the Maas is not built for the time being.



ROTTERDAM

Feyenoord temporarily stops construction of new stadium on the Maas

The football club wants to 'reconsider' the new stadium in Feyenoord City due to the increased construction costs. The question is whether the Rotterdam city council will agree to further postponement.



STADIUM PLAN

Feyenoord City is still kept alive with words

There is still talk about further delaying the construction of the new Feyenoord stadium. The football club itself is said to have lost confidence in the ambitious project.





CONTENT



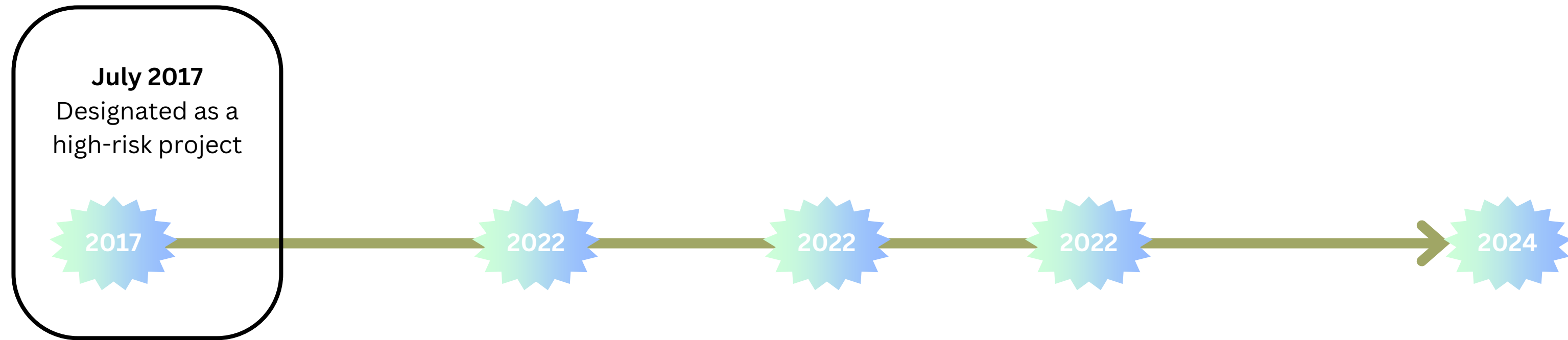
(Office for Metropolitan Architecture [OMA], 2018)



(Office for Metropolitan Architecture [OMA], 2018)

CONTENT

1. Case Study Feyenoord City
2. Strategic Scenarios
3. Research Questions
4. Research Method
5. Results
6. Strategy Process Proposal
7. Limitations and Recommendations
for Future Studies
8. Conclusion



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Regulation for high-risk projects Rotterdam 2012

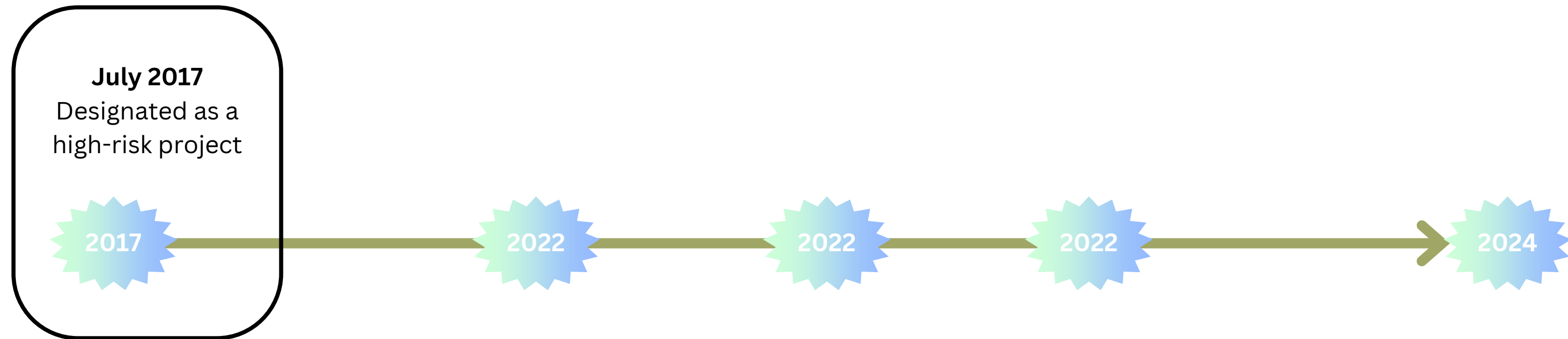
Valid from 29-10-2014 to present

Municipal Gazette 2014

Article 3 Designation of high-risk project

4. The project designated by the council as a risky project meets the following criteria:
 - a. there is a non-routine, time-limited activity;
 - b. the municipality bears sole or majority responsibility for the project;**
 - c. there are multiple parties involved;
 - d. there are substantial financial consequences and/or significant implementation risks associated with the project;
 - e. there are important consequences for society or municipal operations;
 - f. new technologies or financing structures are being applied;
 - g. there is an organizationally complex management and implementation process.

(Municipality of Rotterdam, 2014)



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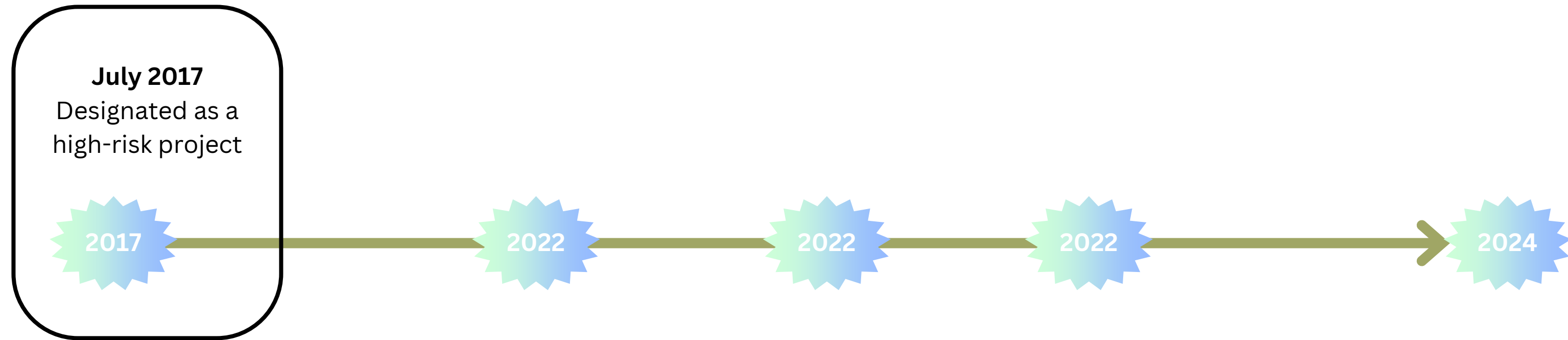
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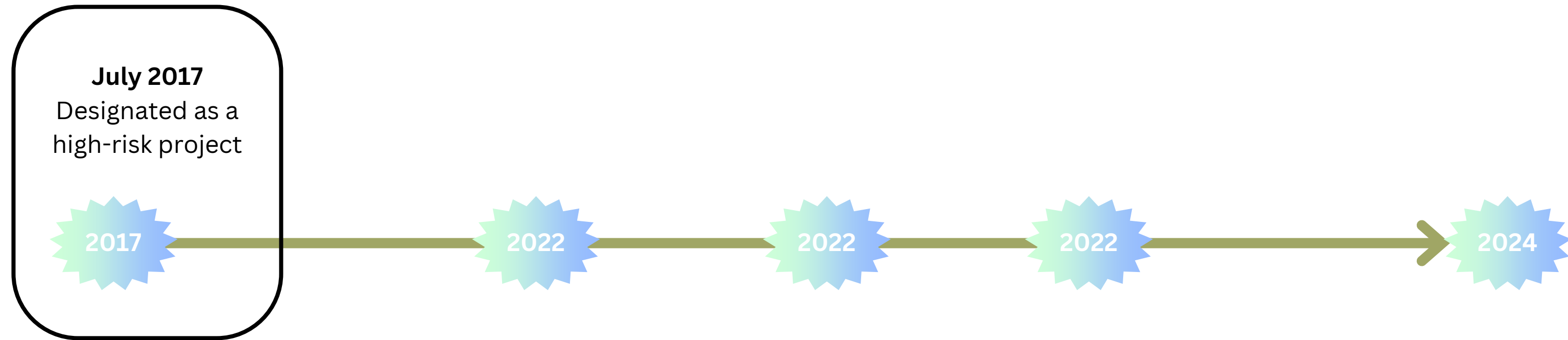
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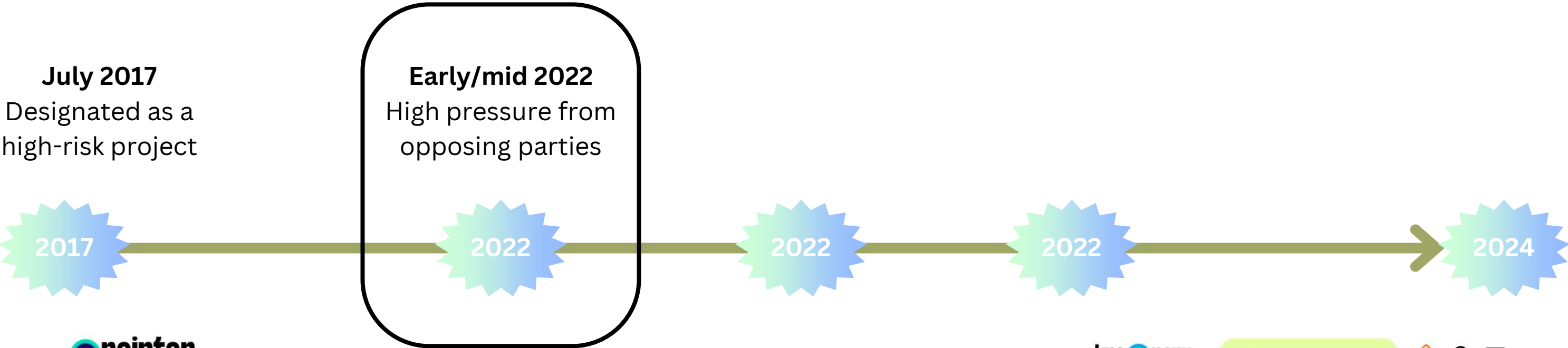
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Municipal Gazette 2014

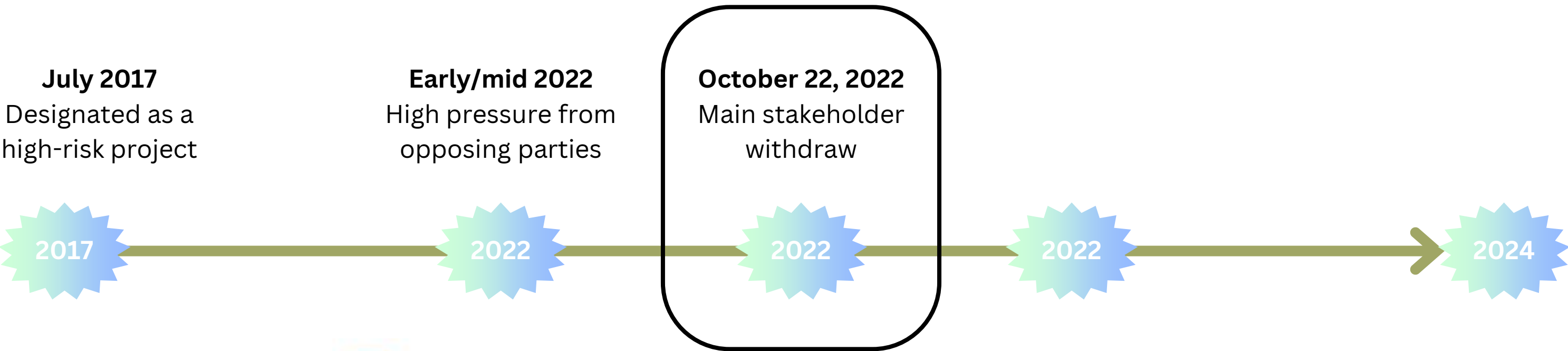
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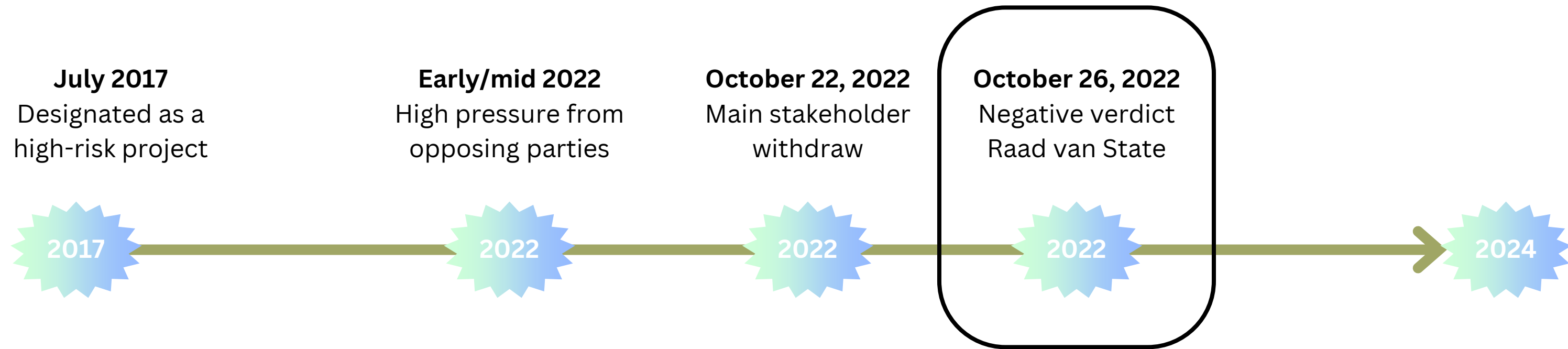
(Municipality of Rotterdam, 2014)



(Logger, 2022)



(Van Eersel, 2022)



Raad
vanState

You are here: Home > 'Feyenoord City' project fails at Council of State

'Feyenoord City' project fails at Council of State

Published on October 26, 2022



Read the full decision of the Administrative Jurisdiction Division with case number 202101596/1 here.

[Read pronouncement](#)

(Raad van State, 2022)



Motie: Eindrapportage Feyenoord City

Date Completed	15-2-2024
Explanation	Completed by the council on 15-02-2024
To Vote	<div><div>100%</div><div>Show votes</div><div>50PLUS (1), CDA (1), Christian Union (1), D66 (5), DENK (4), Forum for Democracy (1), GroenLinks (4), Livable Rotterdam (8), Party for the Animals (2), PvdA (3), SP (1), Volt (1), VVD (4), BIJ1 (1)</div></div>

(City Council of Rotterdam (2), 2024)





Feyenoord no longer has confidence in new stadium and stops with Feyenoord City

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Increasing doubts about Feyenoord City's multi-million project

Strategic Scenarios



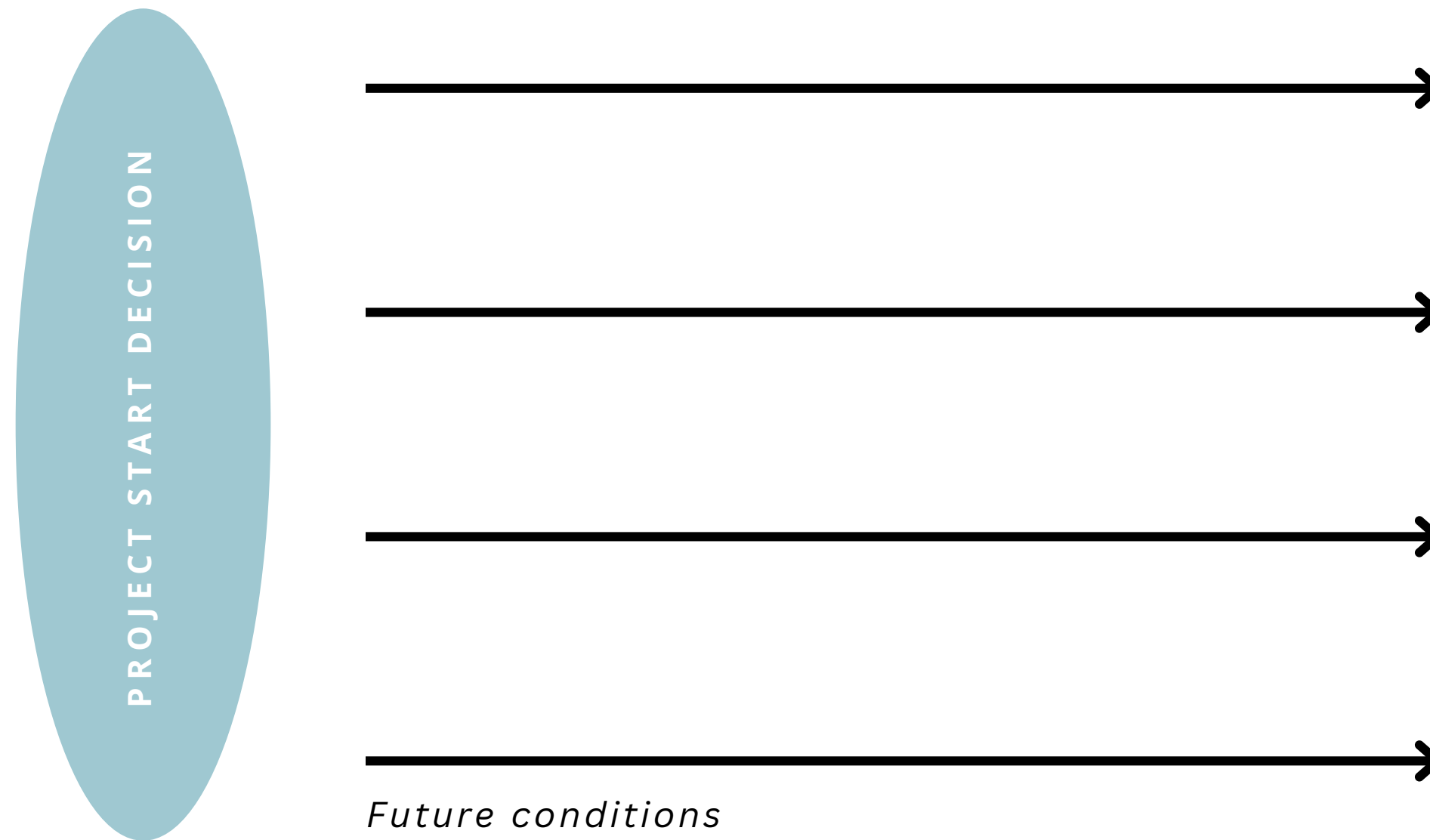
(Gemeente Rotterdam, 2017)

Strategic Scenarios



Primary goal of strategic scenarios (Börjeson et al., 2006): to examine how (1) *decisions* might play out under

Strategic Scenarios



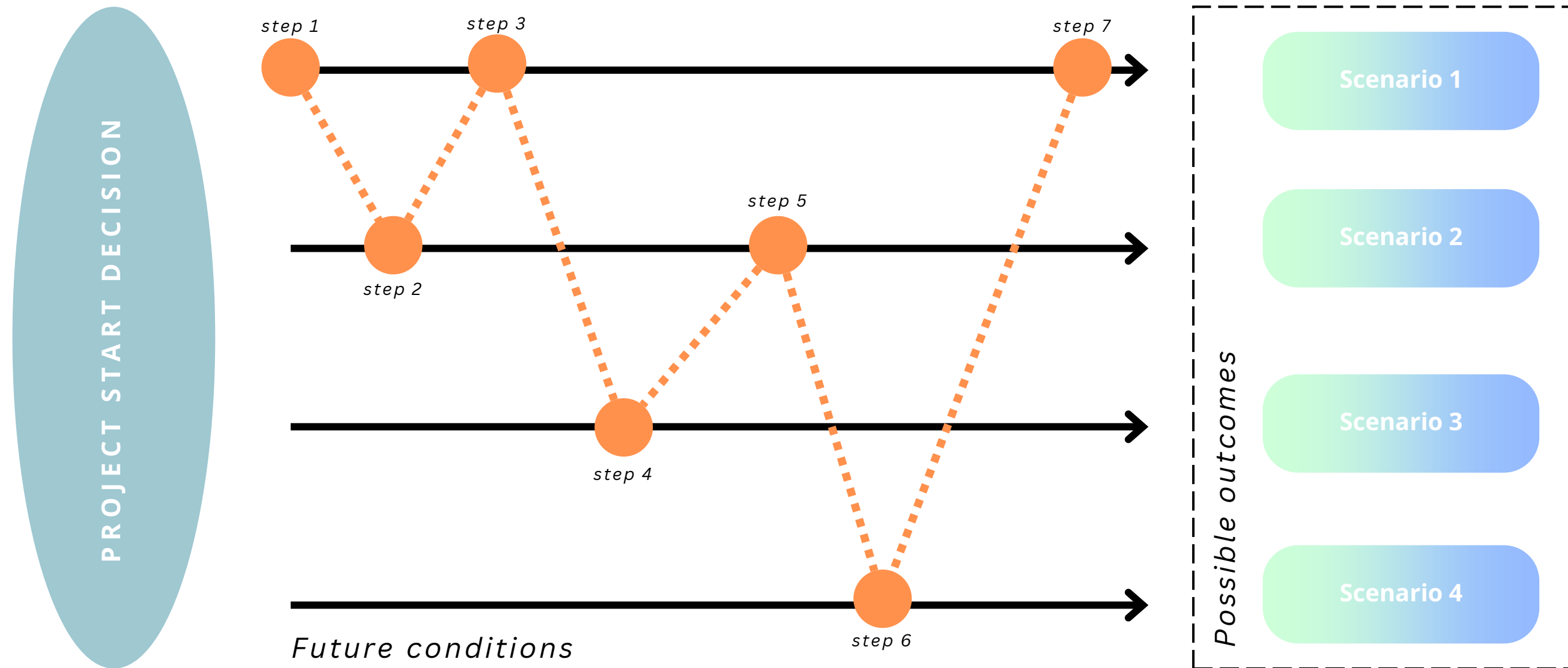
Primary goal of strategic scenarios (Börjeson et al., 2006): to examine how (1) *decisions* might play out under different (2) *future conditions*,

Strategic Scenarios



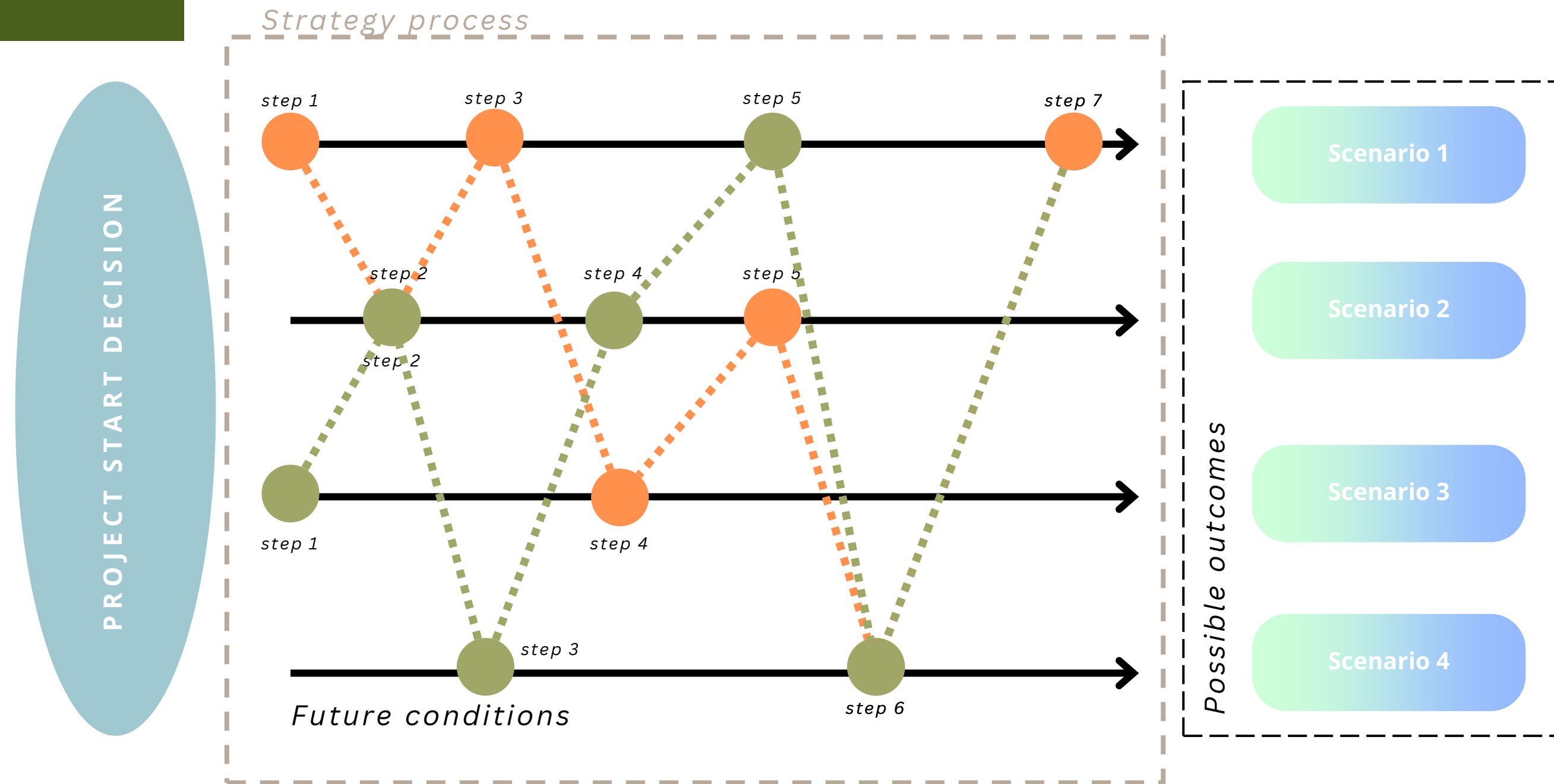
Primary goal of strategic scenarios (Börjeson et al., 2006): to examine how (1) *decisions* might play out under different (2) *future conditions*, providing a (3) *range of possible outcomes*.

Strategic Scenarios



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Strategic Scenarios

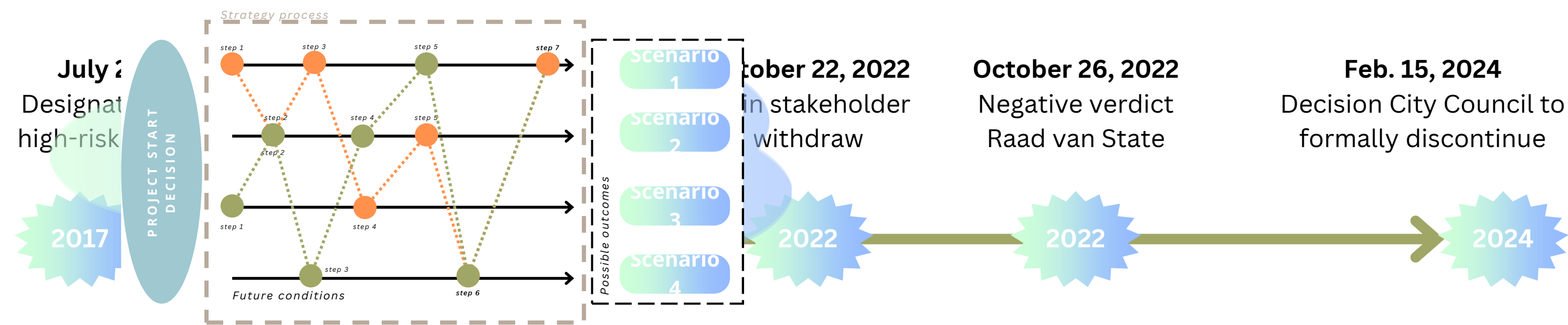


Primary goal of strategic scenarios (Börjeson et al., 2006): to examine how (1) *decisions* might play out under different (2) *future conditions*, providing a (3) *range of possible outcomes*.

Research Questions

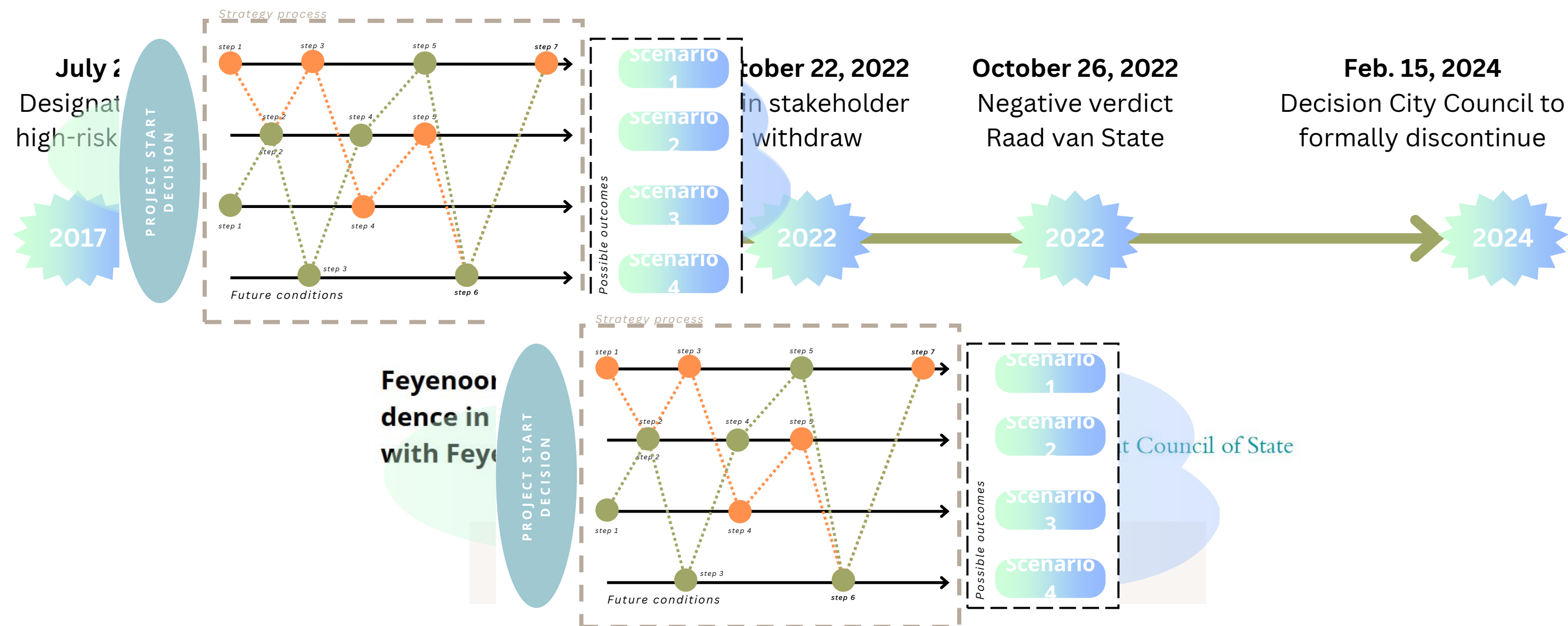
Main Question

“How can strategic scenario thinking be **integrated** into Rotterdam's urban development process,

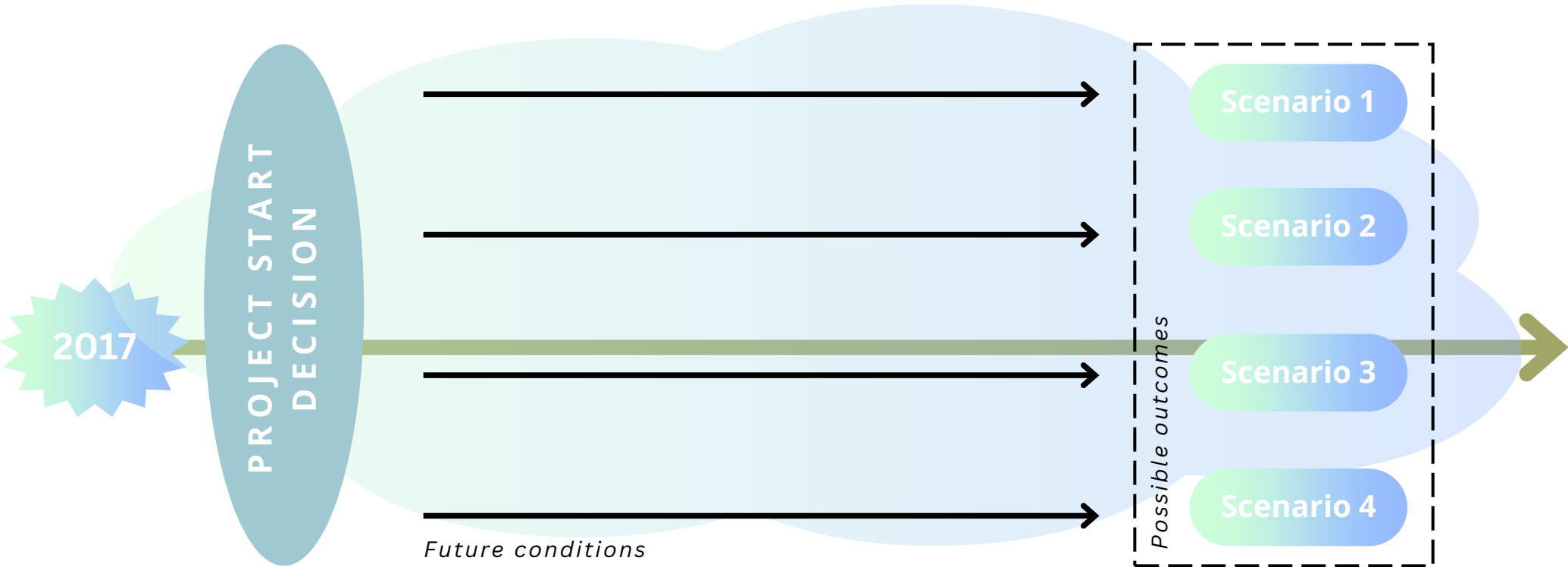


Main Question

*“How can strategic scenario thinking be **integrated** into Rotterdam's urban development process, and what **potential** does it hold for addressing politically sensitive urban development projects, particularly in the case of Feyenoord City?”*



Sub-Questions

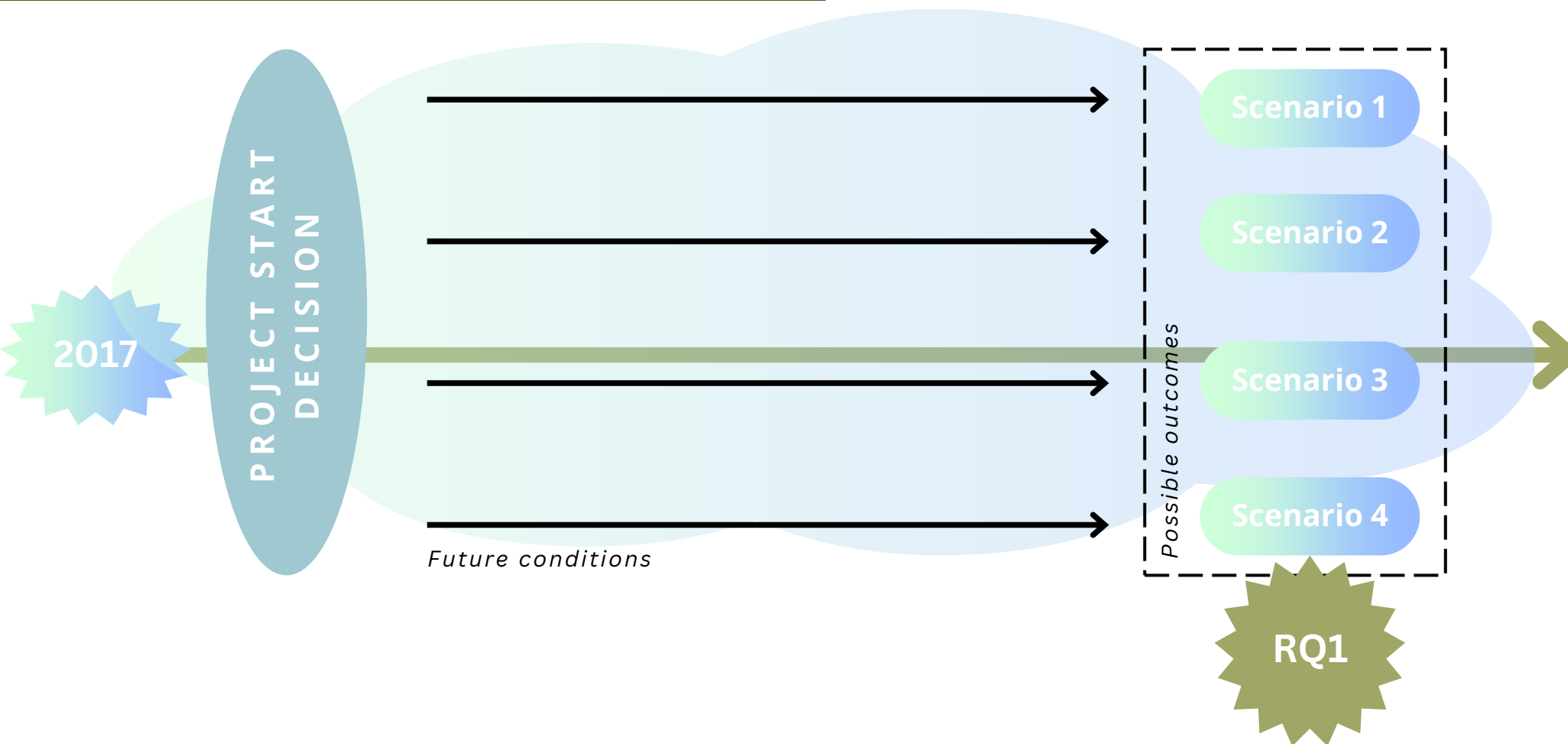


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Sub-Questions



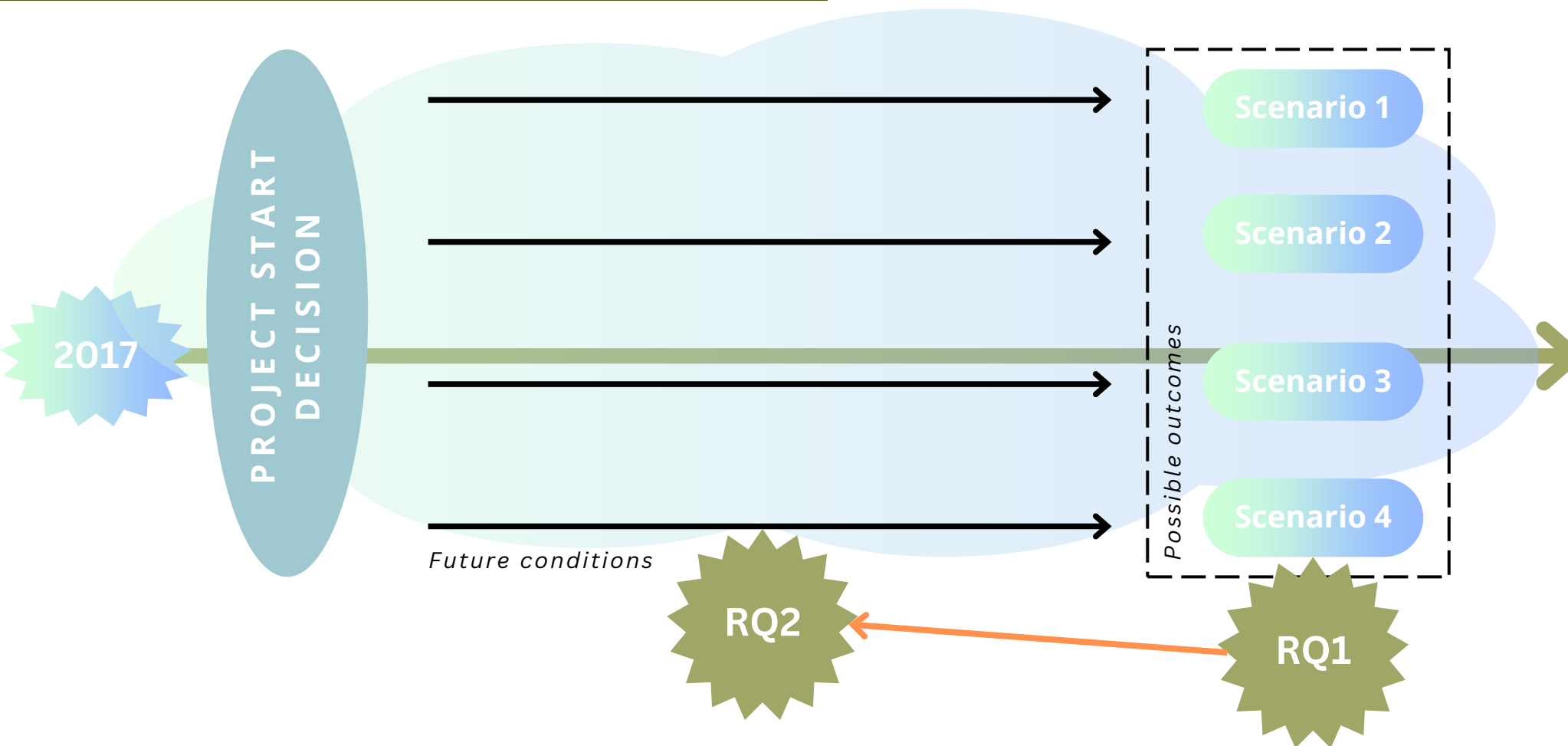
RQ1: What strategic scenarios can retrospectively be formulated for the case of Feyenoord City?

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Sub-Questions



RQ1: What strategic scenarios can **retrospectively** be formulated for the case of Feyenoord City?

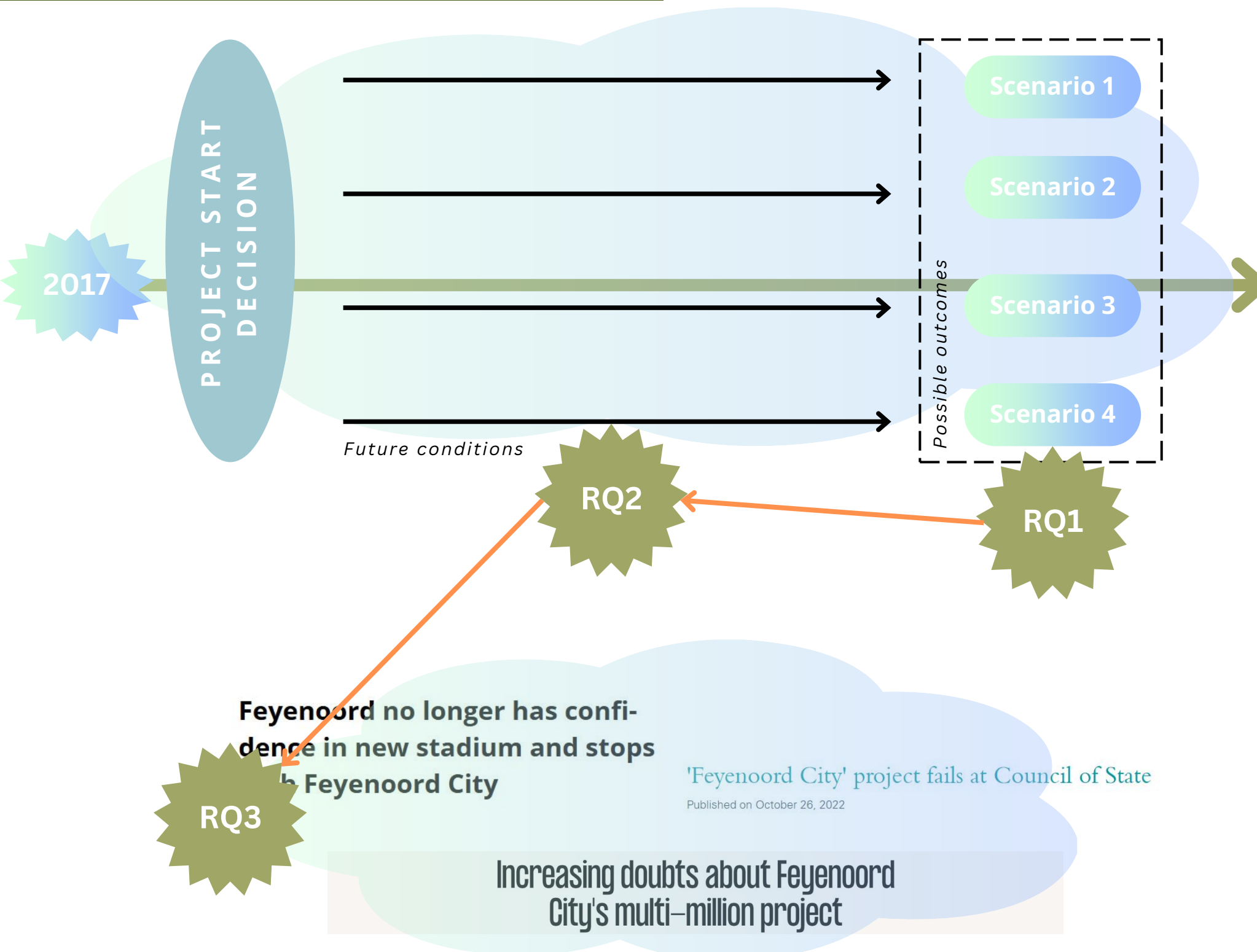
RQ2: What **type of challenges** in politically sensitive urban renewal projects, such as those in Feyenoord City, could be mitigated through strategic scenario thinking?

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Sub-Questions



RQ1: What strategic scenarios can **retrospectively** be formulated for the case of Feyenoord City?

RQ2: What **type of challenges** in politically sensitive urban renewal projects, such as those in Feyenoord City, could be mitigated through strategic scenario thinking?

RQ3: What are the **key mechanisms** for integrating strategic scenario thinking into the existing urban planning and decision-making processes of Rotterdam's Department of City Planning?

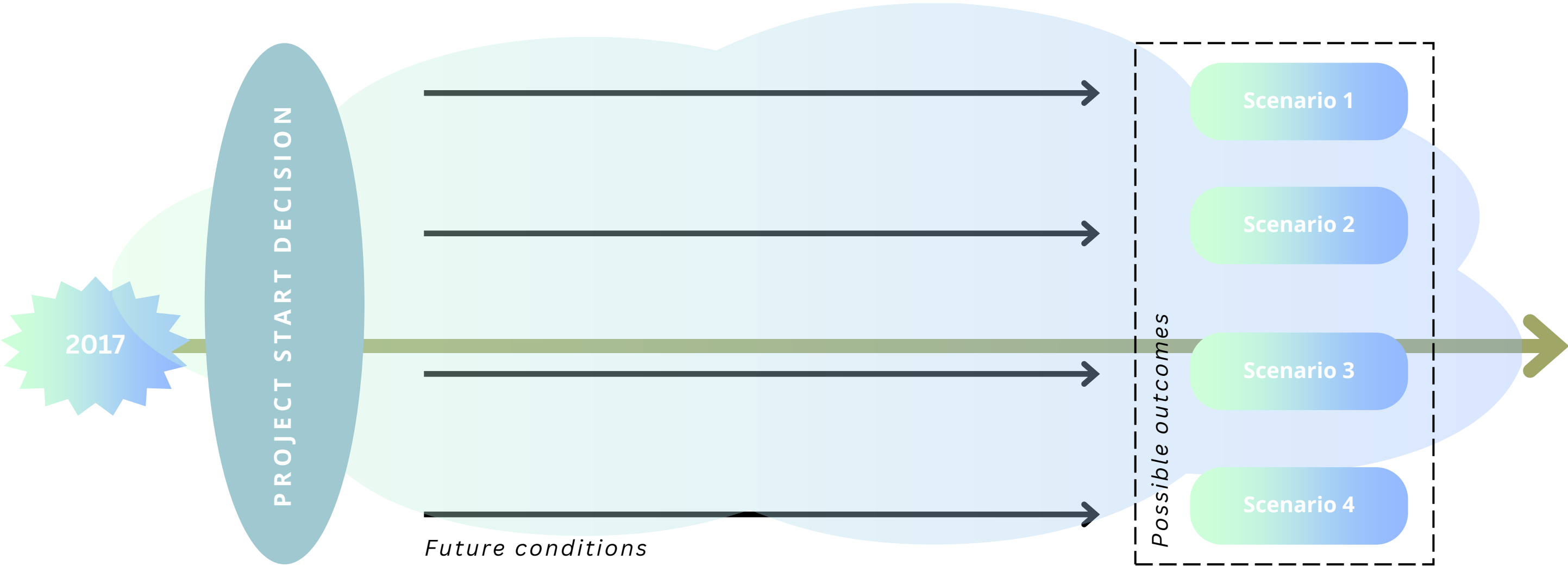
This aerial photograph shows the Rotterdam city center with a green-shaded area indicating the proposed urban development project. The shaded area includes the Nieuw Stadion, Urban Bridge, Waterfront ontwikkeling, De Strip, De Kuip, and Kuip Park. Surrounding areas include Laan op Zuid, Kijk in de Kop, and De Veranda.

(Gemeente Rotterdam, 2017)

Methodology

Literature Review

Analysis suitable
scenario type

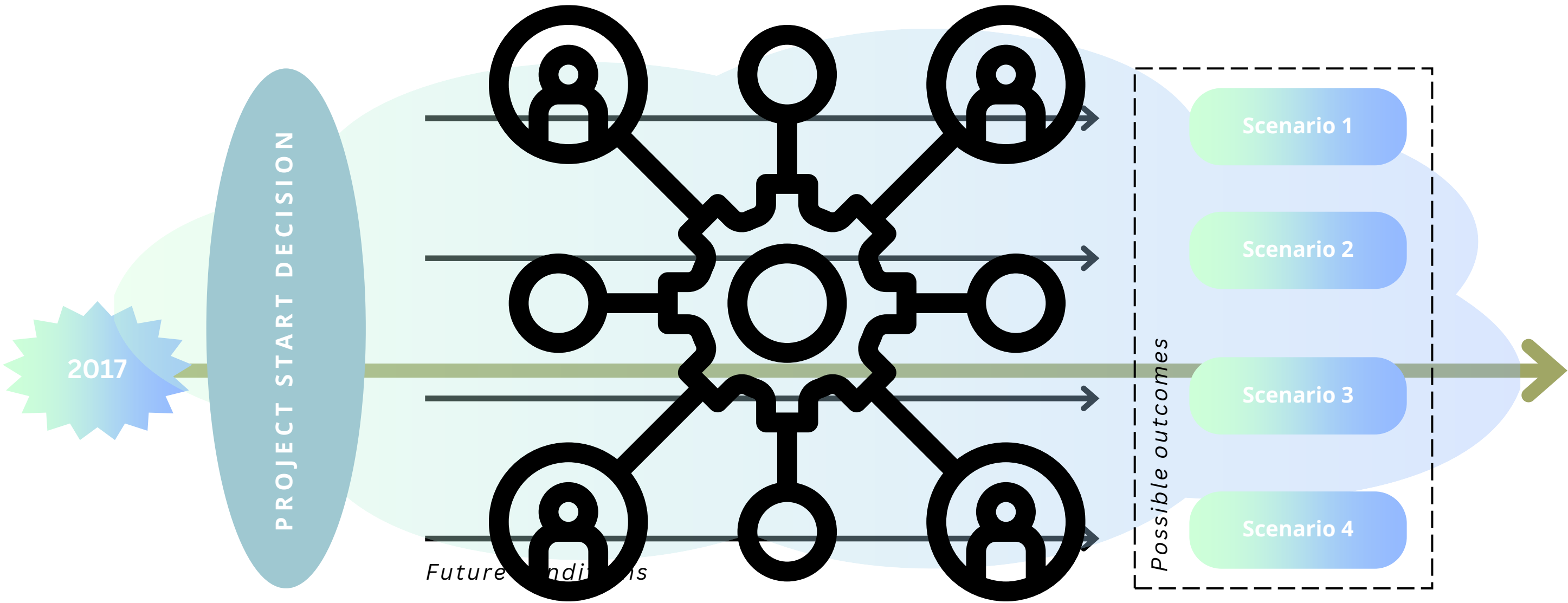


Methodology

Literature Review

Analysis suitable
scenario type

Analysis suitable
organisational
structure for scenario
implementation



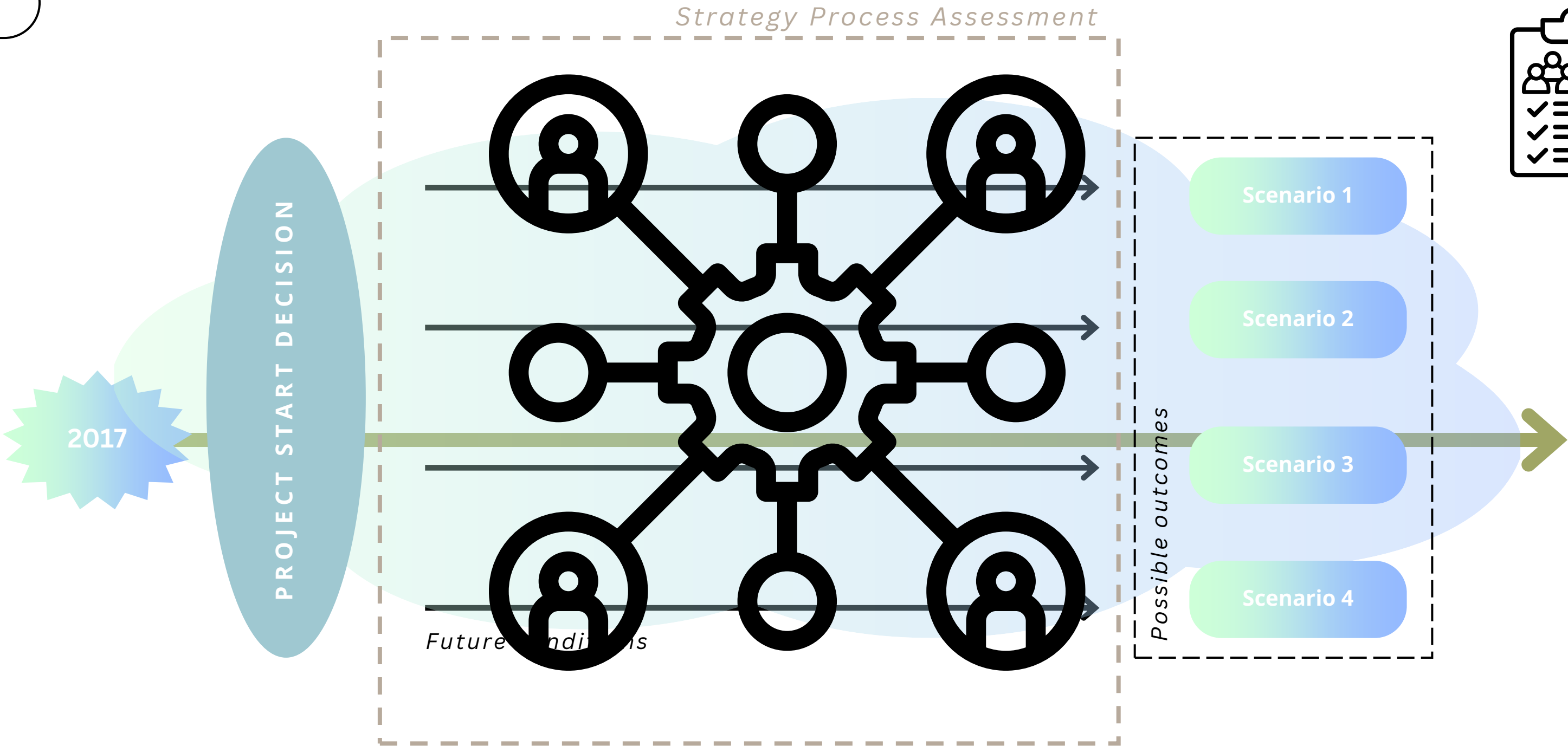
Methodology

Literature Review

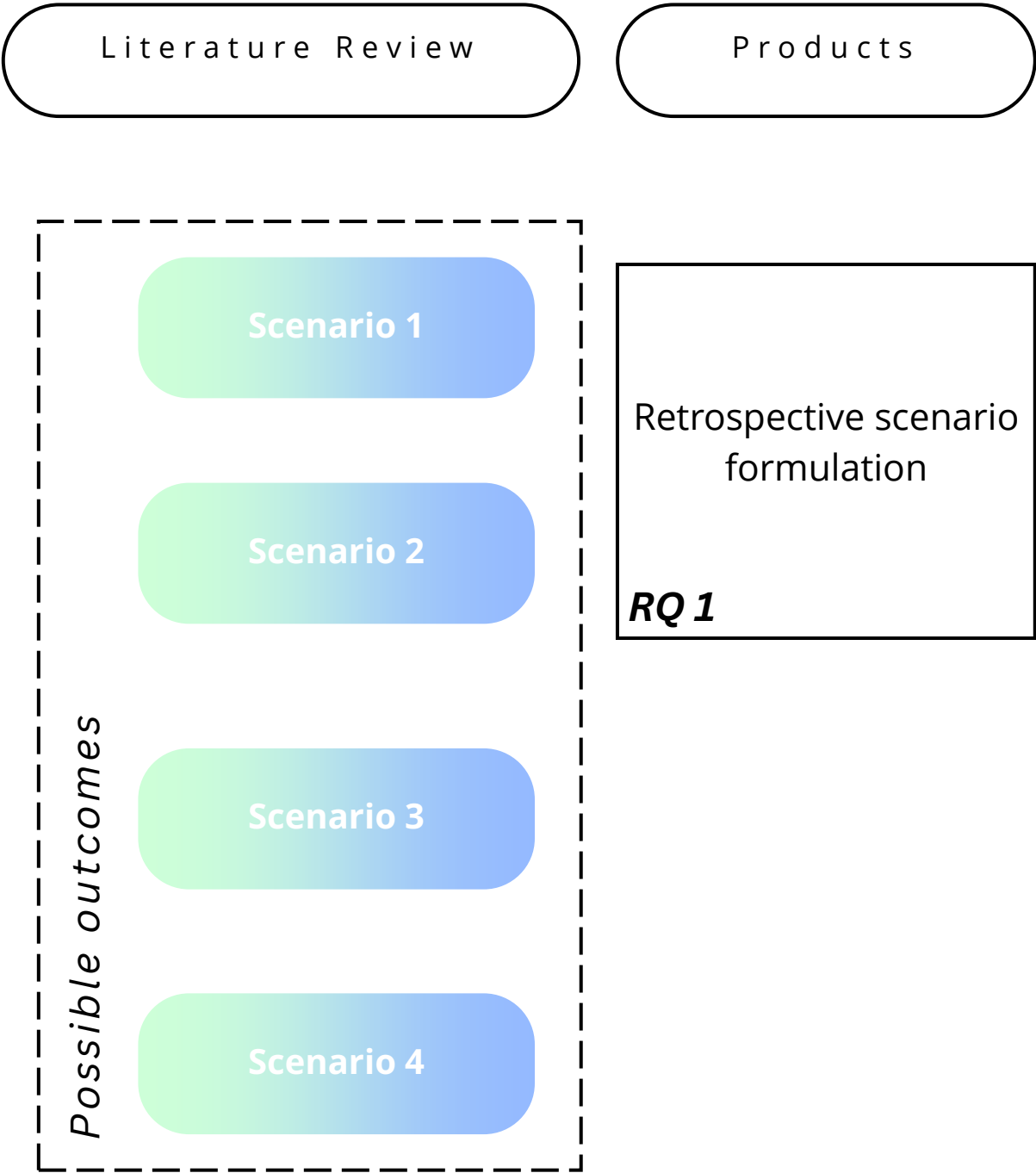
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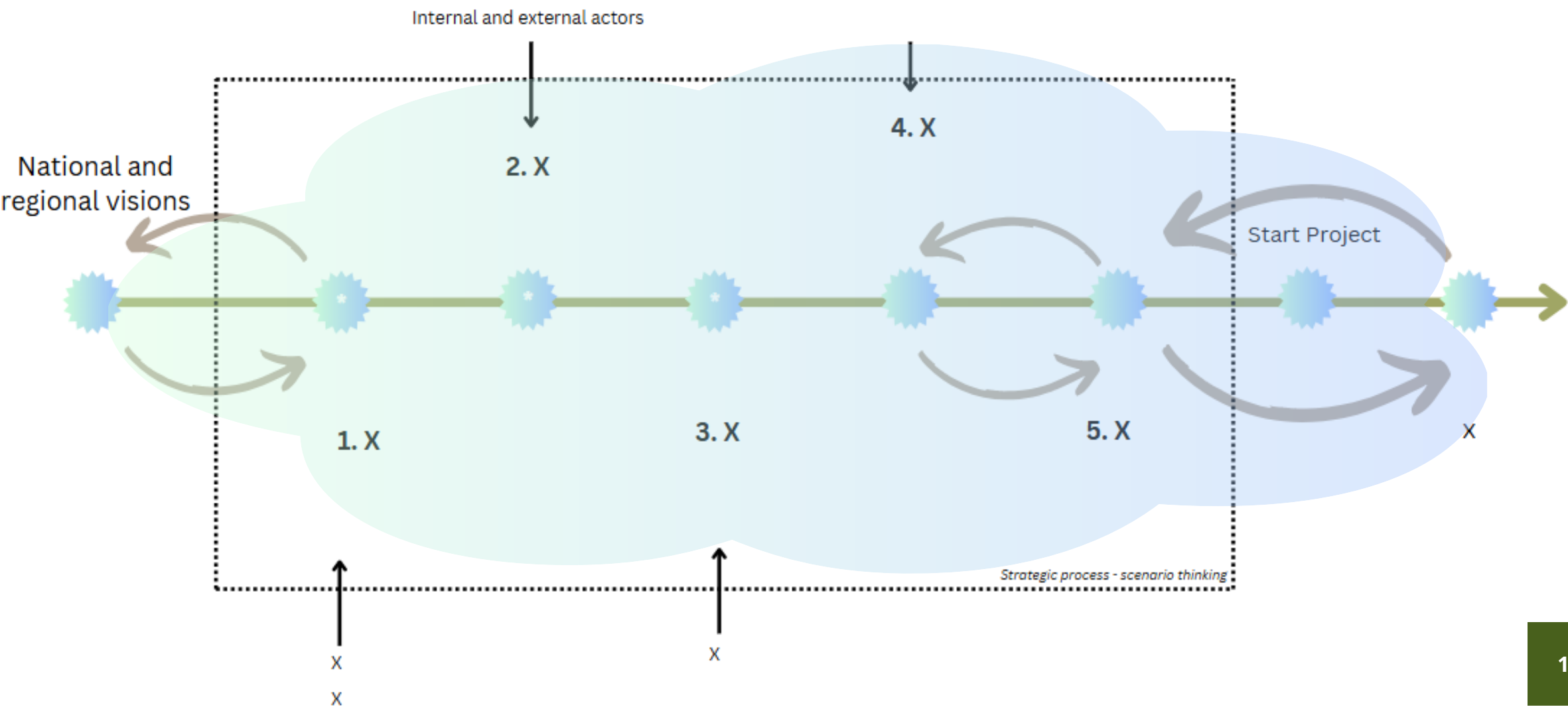
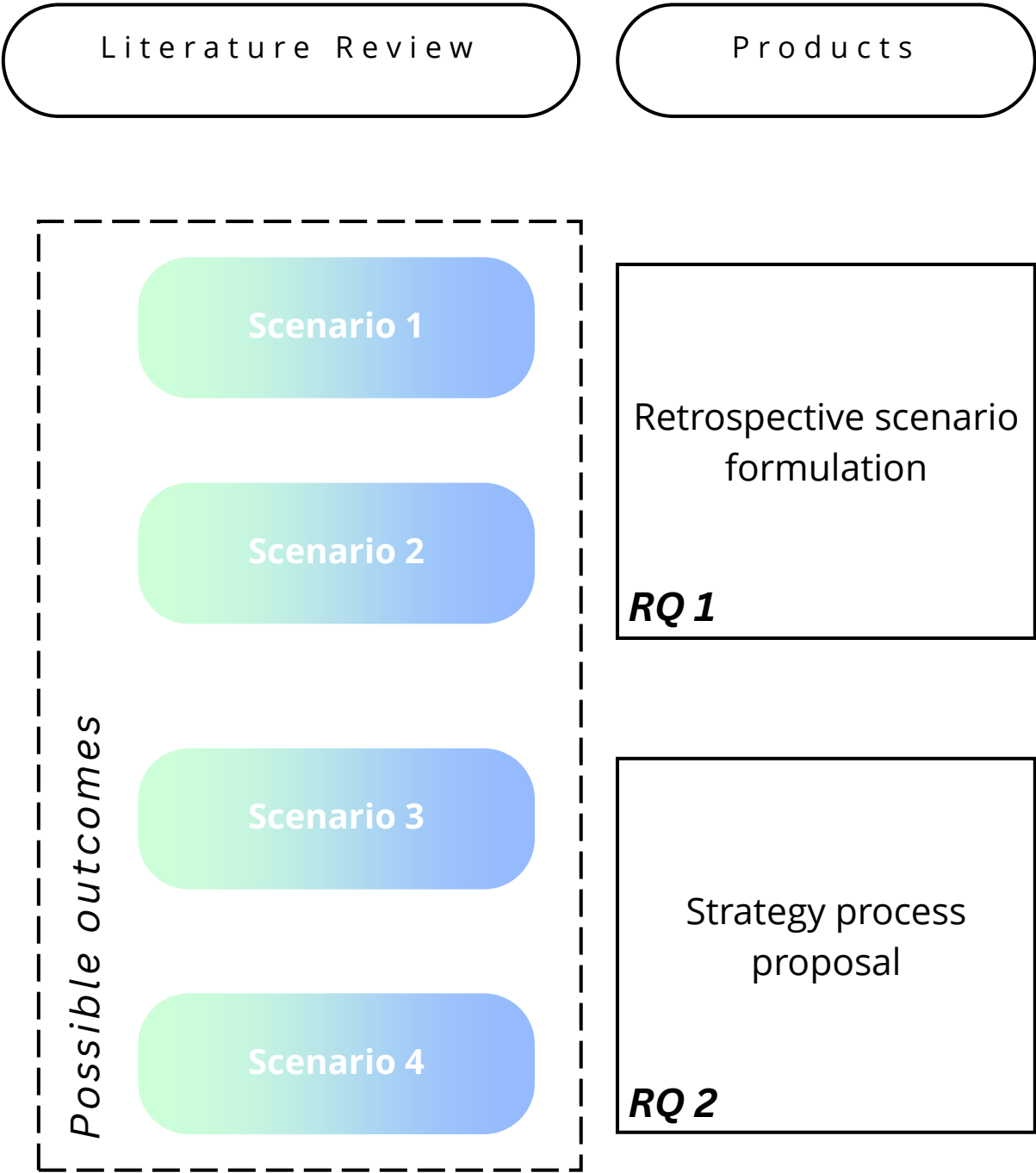
Theoretical framework
for data analysis



Methodology



Methodology



Methodology

Literature Review

Products

Data Collection

Retrospective scenario
formulation

RQ 1

Strategy process
proposal

RQ 2

Interactive Sessions

- Experts
- Practitioners

Interviews

- Practitioners

Interactive Sessions

- Academic Experts
- Municipal Practitioners

Two exercises and supplementary questions

Generating pillars

Prioritisation

Integration

Interviews

- Municipal Practitioners
- Opposition

Contextual questions

Methodology

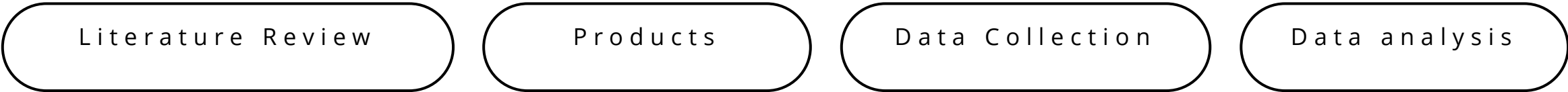


Table 4 | Code-Document Analysis (retrieved from own document in Atlas.ai)

	Academics 3 96	Municipality... 1 52	Supporters... 1 60	Totals
Engagement medium 37	12	7	18	37
Organizational structure 113	56	10	47	113
Outcome 125	58	39	28	125
Participation extent 20	9	6	5	20
Resources 77	29	13	35	77
Scenario Construction a... 66	34	15	17	66
Scenario type 25	7	8	10	25
Scope 65	20	28	17	65
Stakeholder Engagement 72	34	16	22	72
Totals	259	142	199	600

	Engagemen... 37	Organizatio... 113	Outcome 125	Participatio... 20	Resources 77	Scenario Co... 66	Scenario type 25	Scope 65	Stakeholder... 72
Engagemen... 37		24	23	6	14	10	5	12	10
Organizatio... 113	24		59	9	45	30	16	25	44
Outcome 125	23	59		9	44	37	13	50	46
Participati... 20	6	9	9		5	4		5	5
Resources 77	14	45	44	5		20	6	23	41
Scenario C... 66	10	30	37	4	20		20	19	7
Scenario ty... 25	5	16	13		6	20		5	2
Scope 65	12	25	50	5	23	19	5		15
Stakeholde... 72	10	44	46	5	41	7	2	15	

Table 5 | Code co-occurrence analysis (retrieved from own document in Atlas.ai)

Methodology

Literature Review

Products

Data Collection

Data analysis

Assessment

Mitigated challenges through the implementation of scenario thinking

RQ 3

Crucial components		Chakraborty & McMillan (2015) nine key components (p. 11)								
		Organisational structure: Unitary, strong leader, or loose coalition	Scope: single issue, comprehensive, or problem-oriented	Scenario type: Explorative	Outcome: awareness, vision, or policy recommendation	Stakeholder Engagement: General public, government agencies, or interest groups	Participation extent: Inform only, seeking feedback, or joint fact finding	Engagement medium: Web-Based, Face-to-Face, or hybrid	Scenario Construction analysis tools: Qualitative, Planning Support Systems, or Computer Modelling	Resources: statutory or recurring, opportunity-based, fundraised
1	Urban planners need a clear definition of scenarios within urban planning to align internal understanding	x	x	x	x	(17) Understanding Participation Requirements	-	-	(31) Sequential Analytical Steps	-
2	Scenarios are part of the strategic urban planning process, and several tools can be used to set up scenarios.	(1) Sequential Strategy Development	x	(7) Development in chunks	(12) Continuous Evaluation, Not Just Critical moments	(18) Linking Stakeholder Engagement to Strategic Decisions	(22) Broader Stakeholder Analysis	(27) Engagement at Formal Decision Points	(32) Criteria Organisational Tools	(36) Budgetary Alignment with Strategic Decisions
3	Use of scenario narratives help depict how variables interact and offer insight into potential system evolutions.	x	(5) Future-Oriented Planning Tools	(8) Multiple Strategic Levels	(13) External Evaluation	(19) Addressing Dependency Risks	(23) Addressing unexpected Stakeholders	(28) Network-Based Engagement	(33) Forward-Thinking Evaluation	(37) Acknowledgment of Resource Limitations
4	The scenarios implemented can differ depending on the government scale (village/borough and regional/metropolitan) they are implemented	(2) Modular Project Structuring	x	(9) Local and Regional Vision Considerations	(14) Network-Wide Reflection	x	(24) Limited Participation in the decision for Flagship Projects	(29) Modular Engagement	x	(38) Scaled Project Management
5	Practical implications for urban planning, includes the translation of complex analytical results into accessible narratives for informed decision-making	(3) Avoiding Over-Complexity	(6) Directional Rather Than Fixed Scenarios	(10) Breaking Down to Manageable Scales	(15) Regular Reflection and Evaluation Periods	(20) Ensuring Stakeholder Commitment / (21) Establishing Clear Agreements	(25) Consequences of Missing Signals	x	(34) Structured Decision-Making Framework	(39) Financial Commitments
6	Frequent assessments of the evolving dynamics of the urban environment, including demographic, economic, environmental, and social changes, help urban planners to recognize emerging challenges and opportunities	(4) Formal Evaluation Points	x	(11) Transitions between strategies	(16) Annual and Ad-Hoc Evaluation	x	(26) Recognizing Societal Signals	(30) Interactive Sessions for reflection and Evaluation	(35) Transition Analysis Tools	(40) Risk Management

Methodology

Literature Review

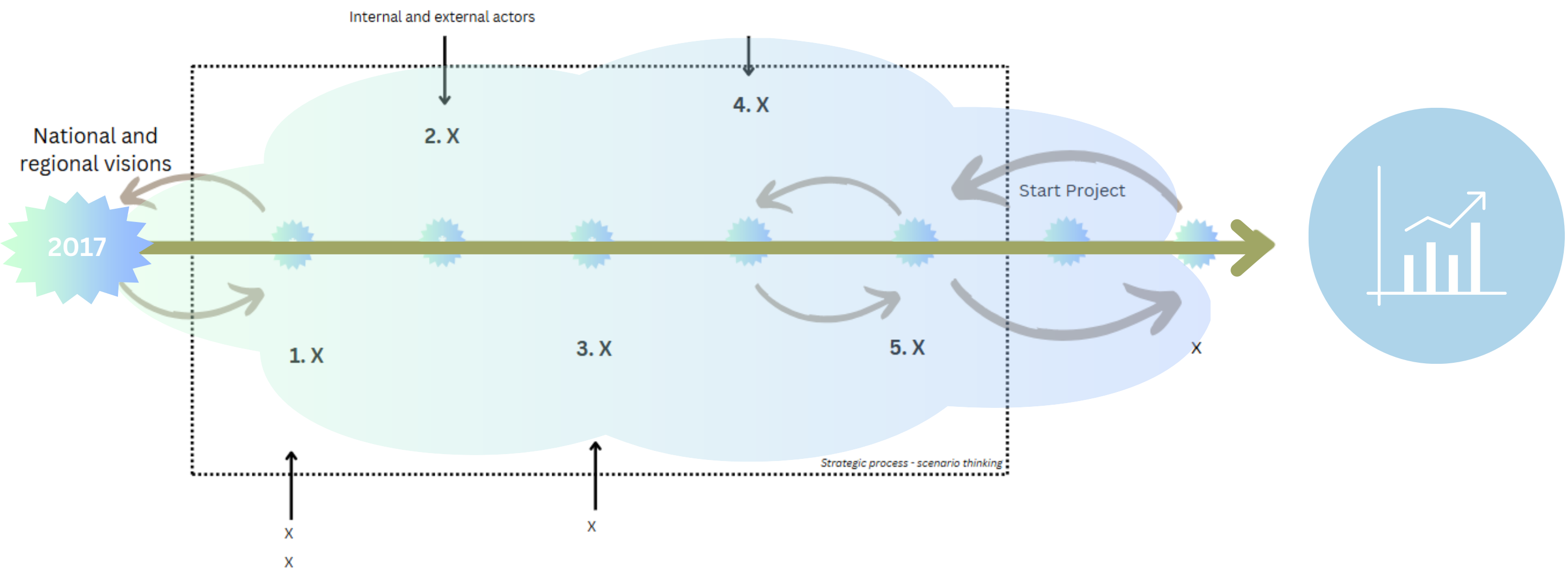
Products

Data Collection

Data analysis

Assessment

Results & conclusion



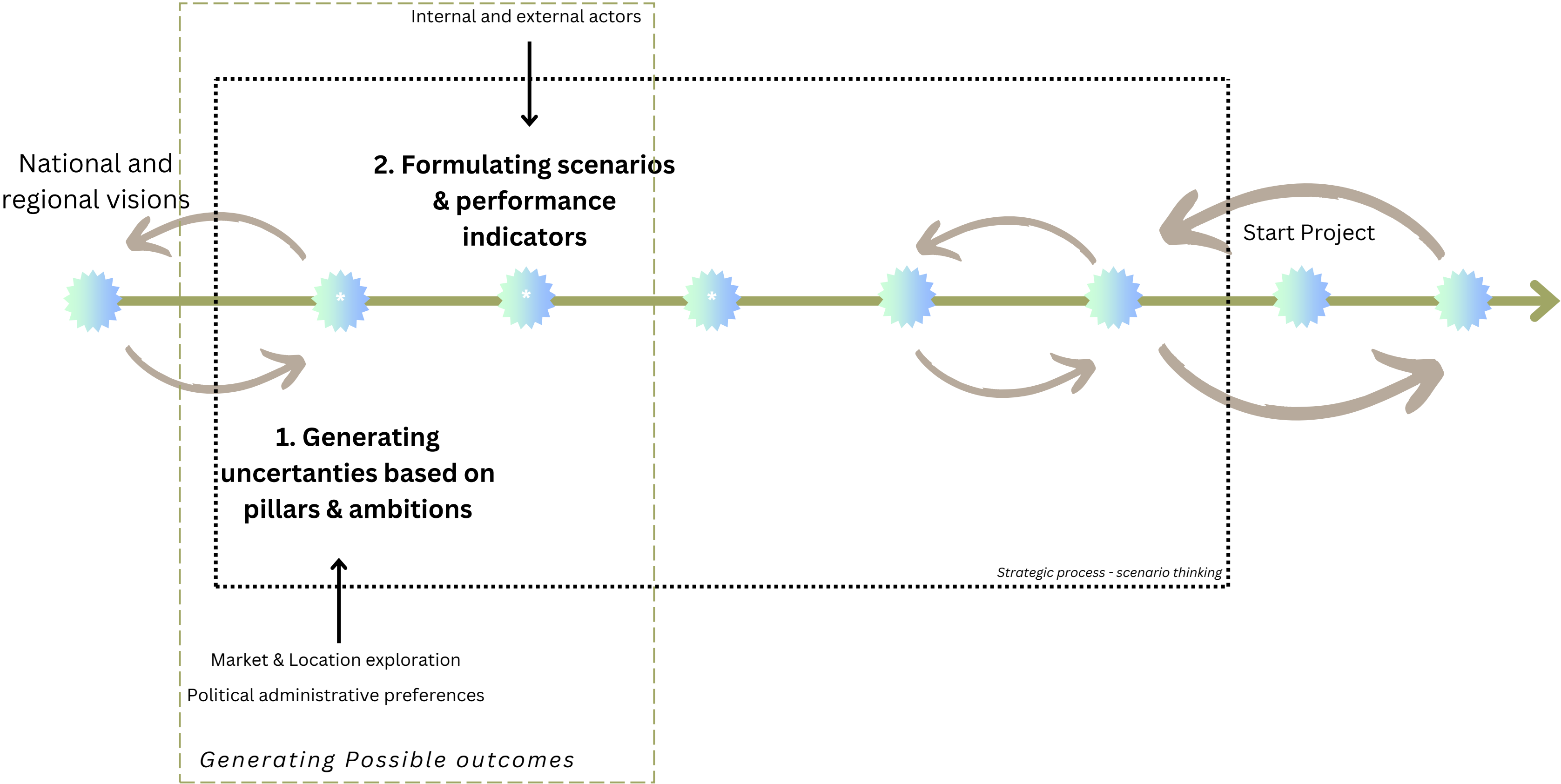
MAIN QUESTION

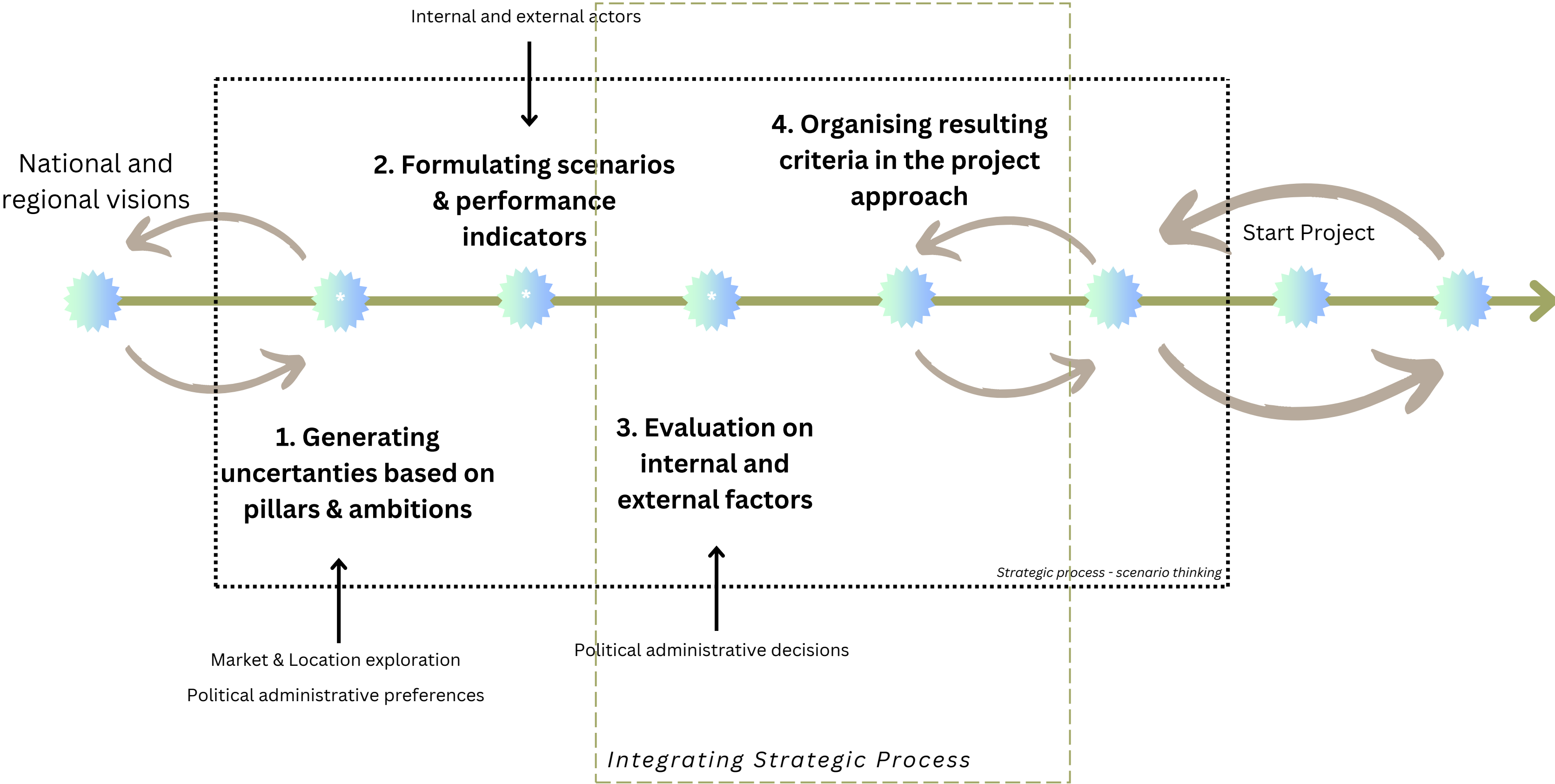
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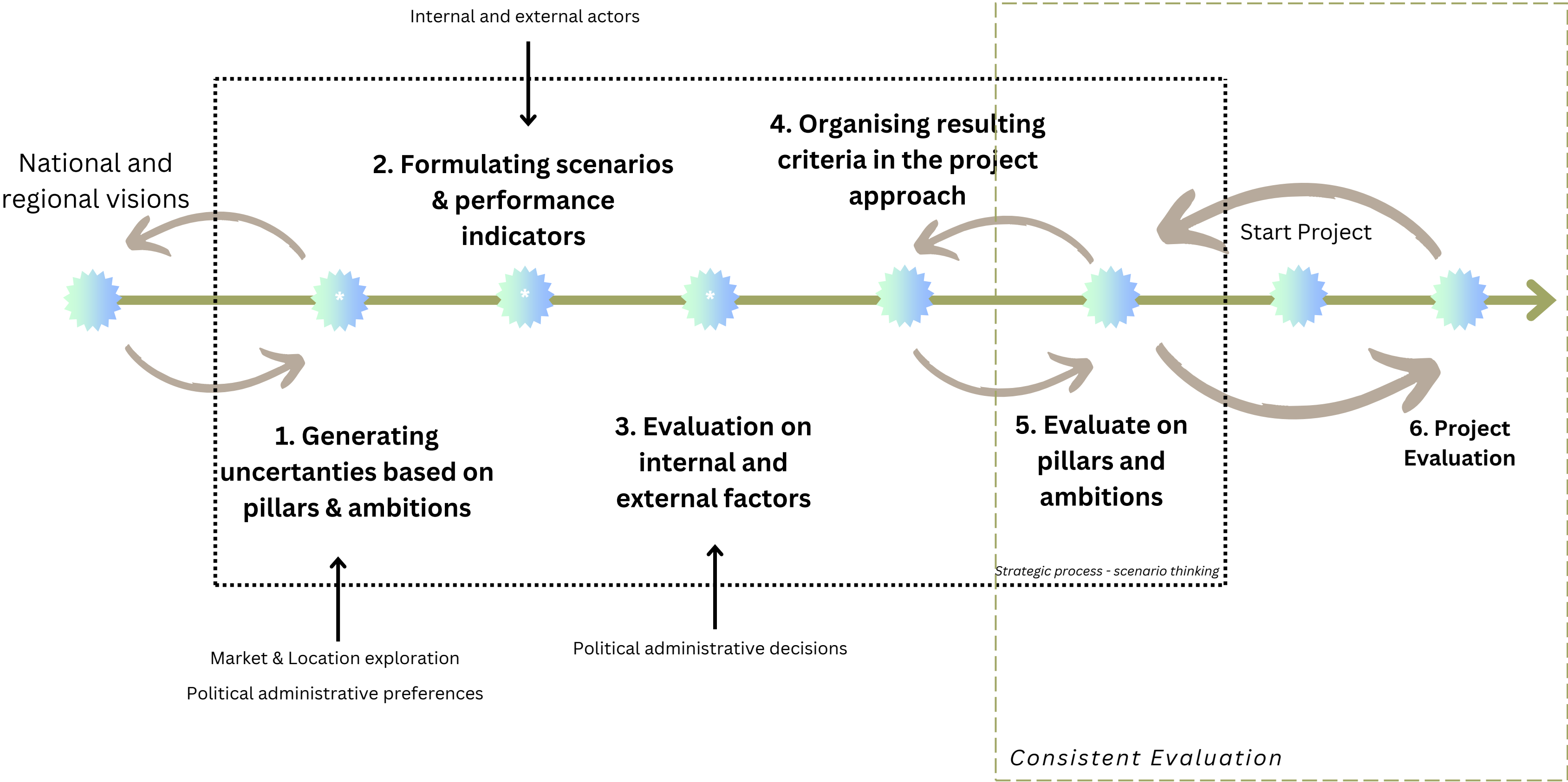
Strategy Proposal



(Bestemmingplan Feyenoord City, NL.IMRO.0599.BP1105FeyenCity-on01)





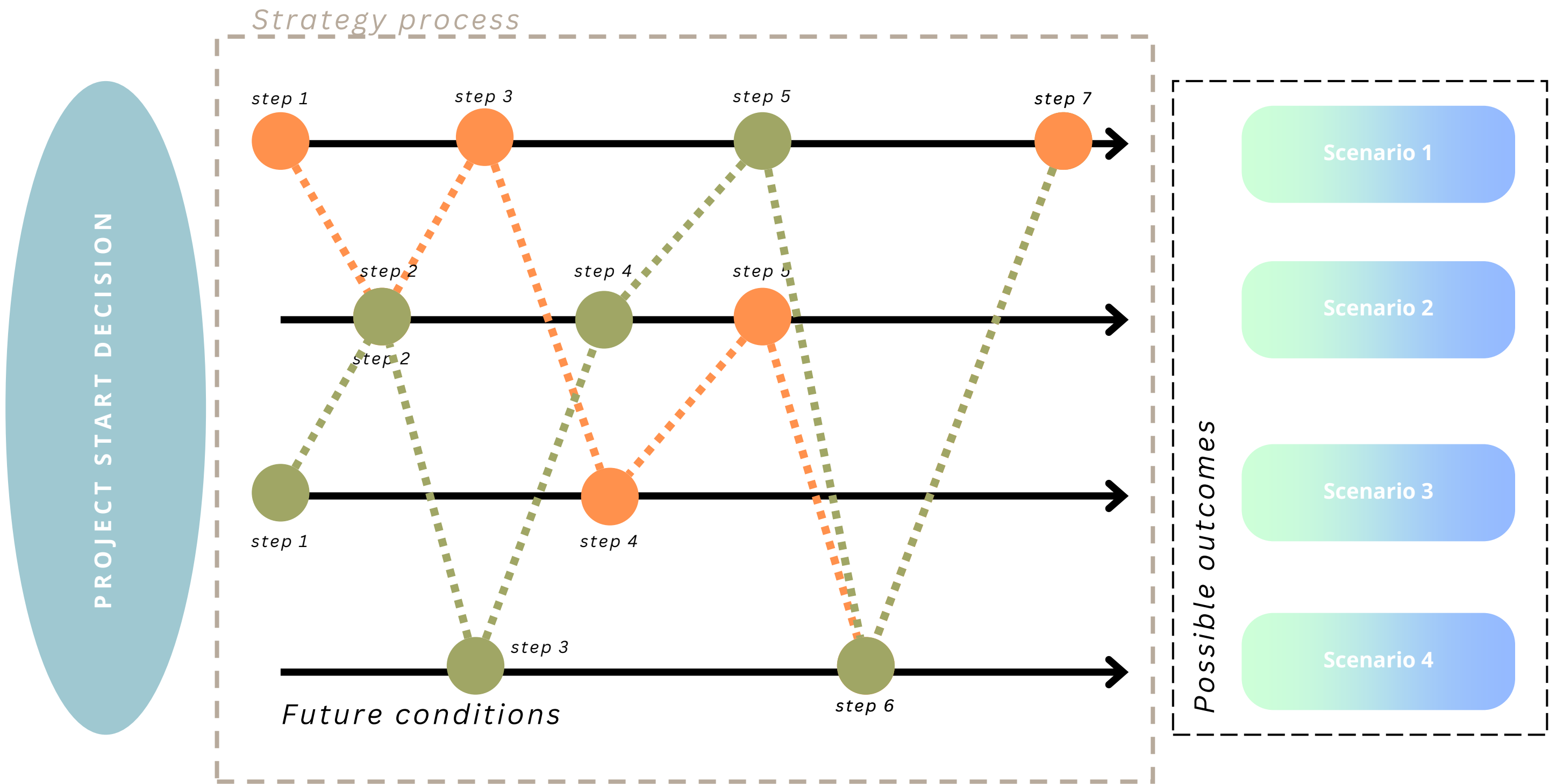


Limitations & Recommendations for Future Studies

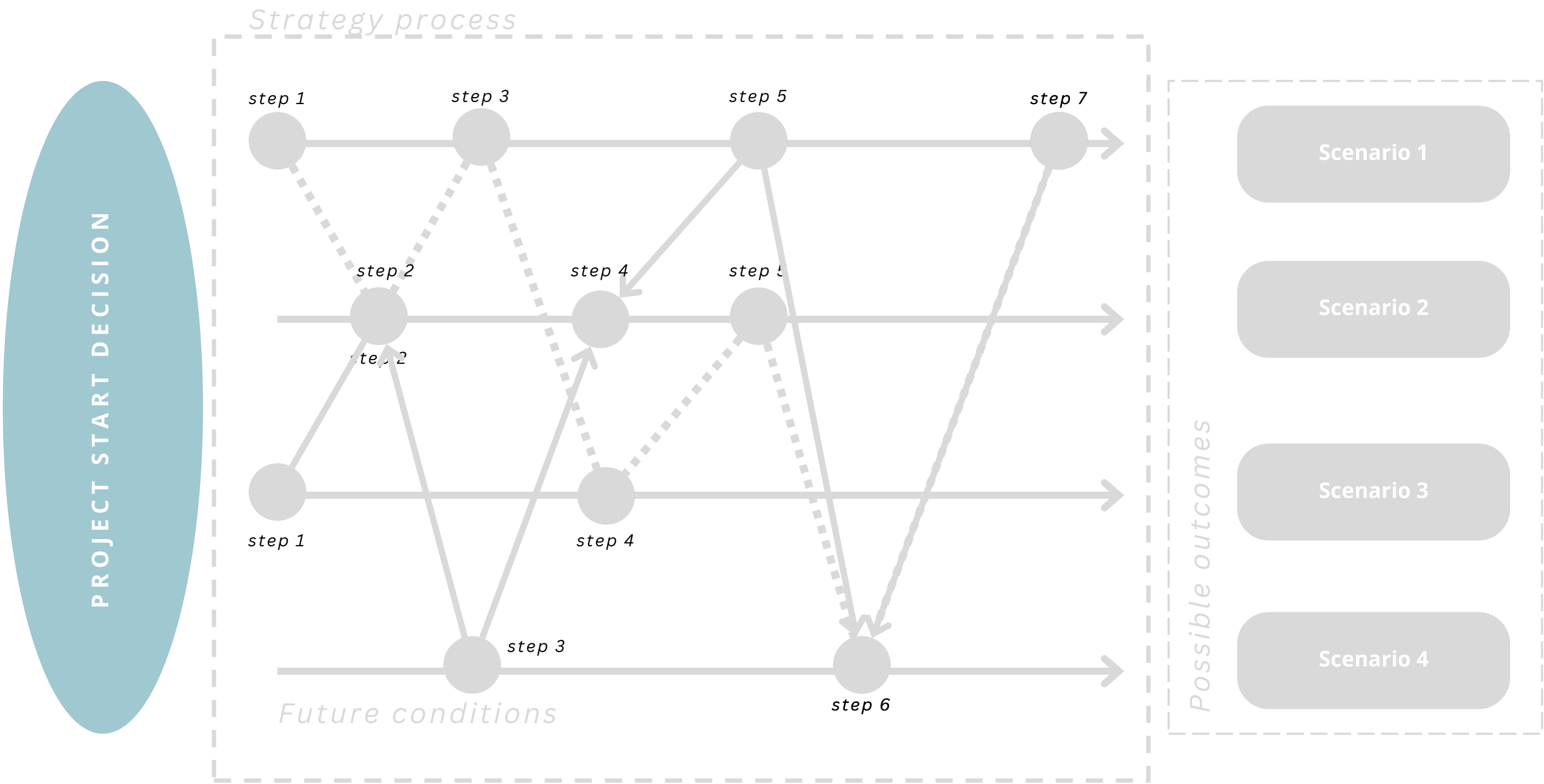


(Feyenoord City Masterplan - LOLA, 2024)

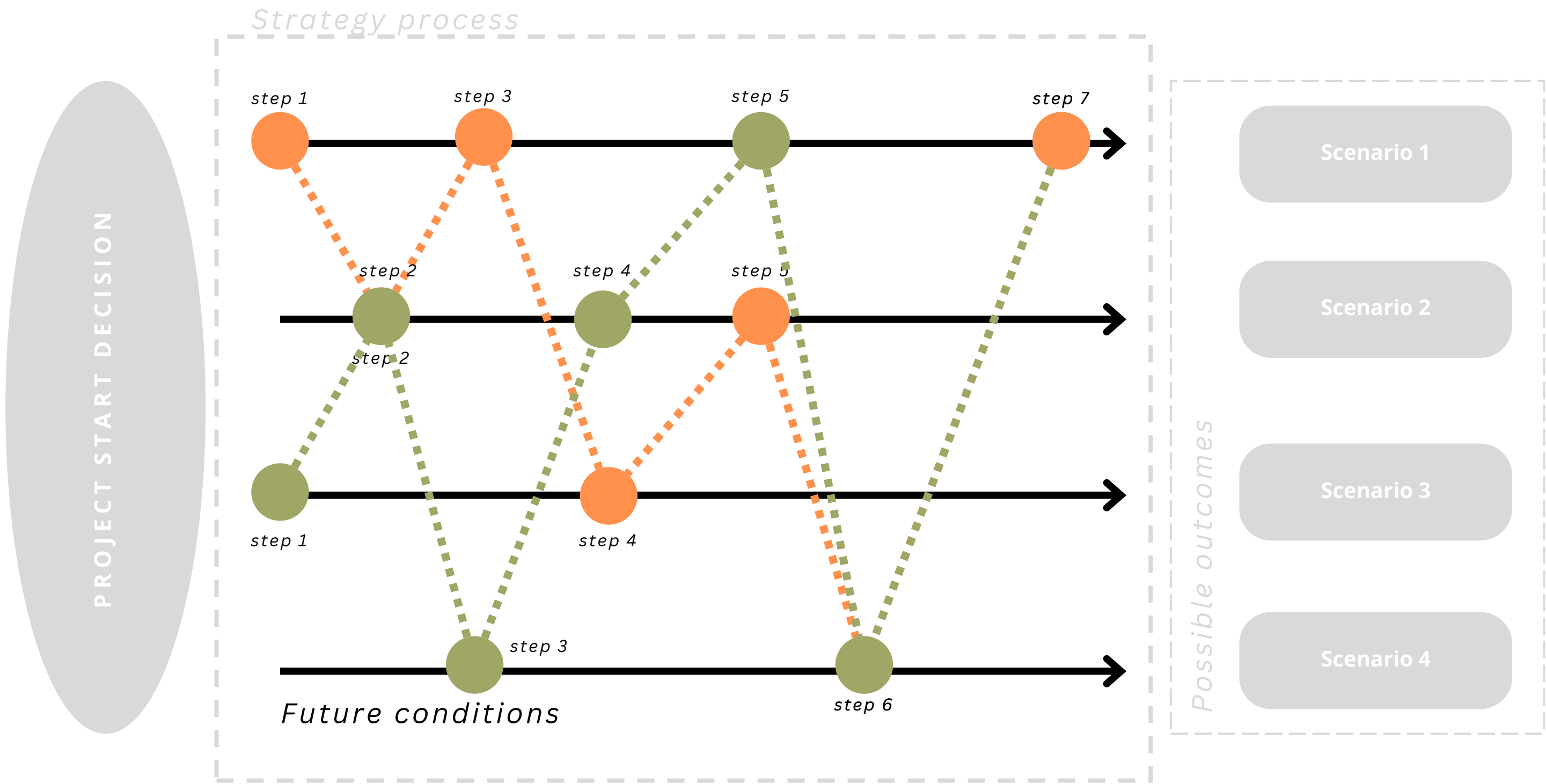
Scope



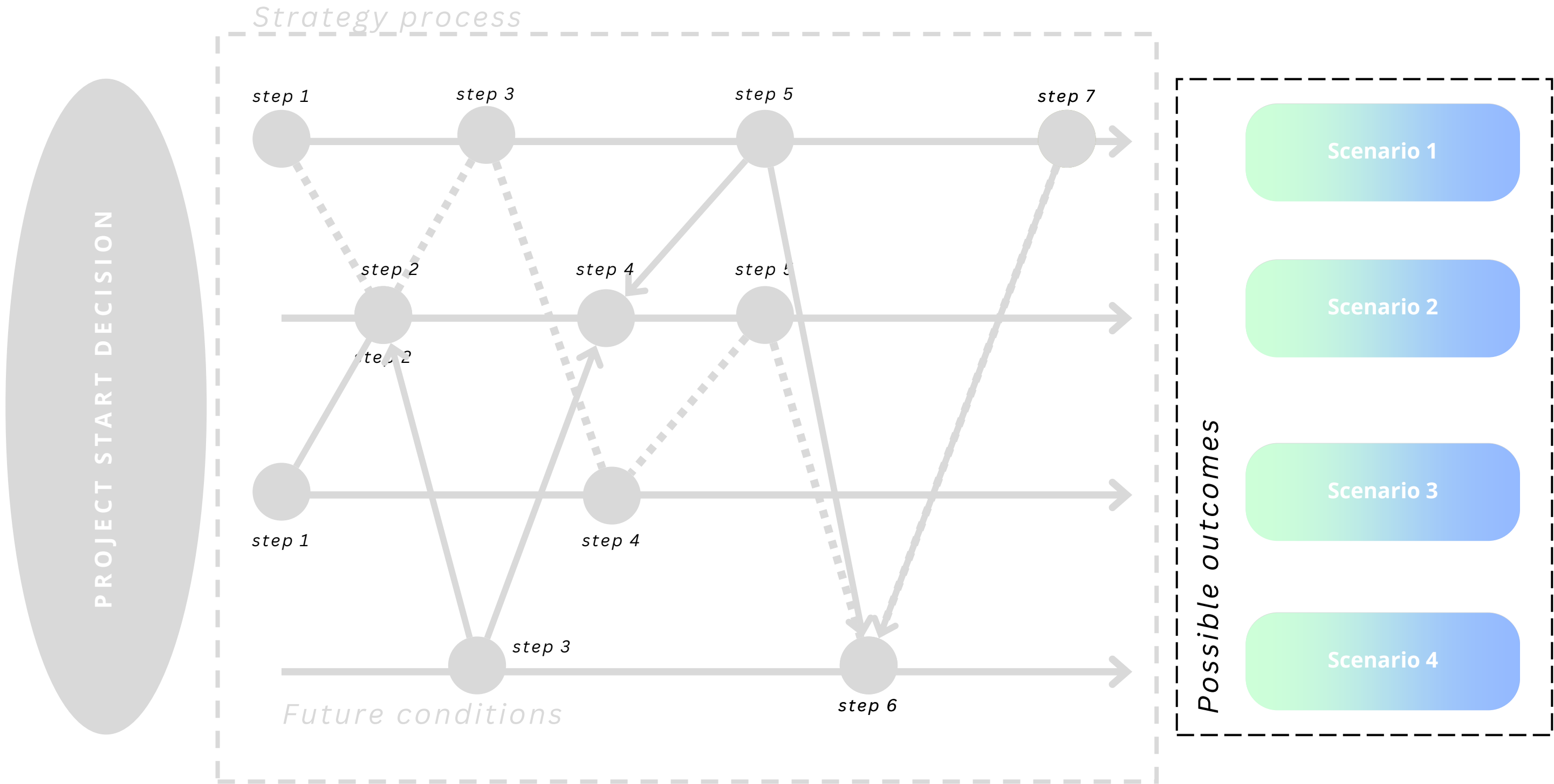
Future Studies



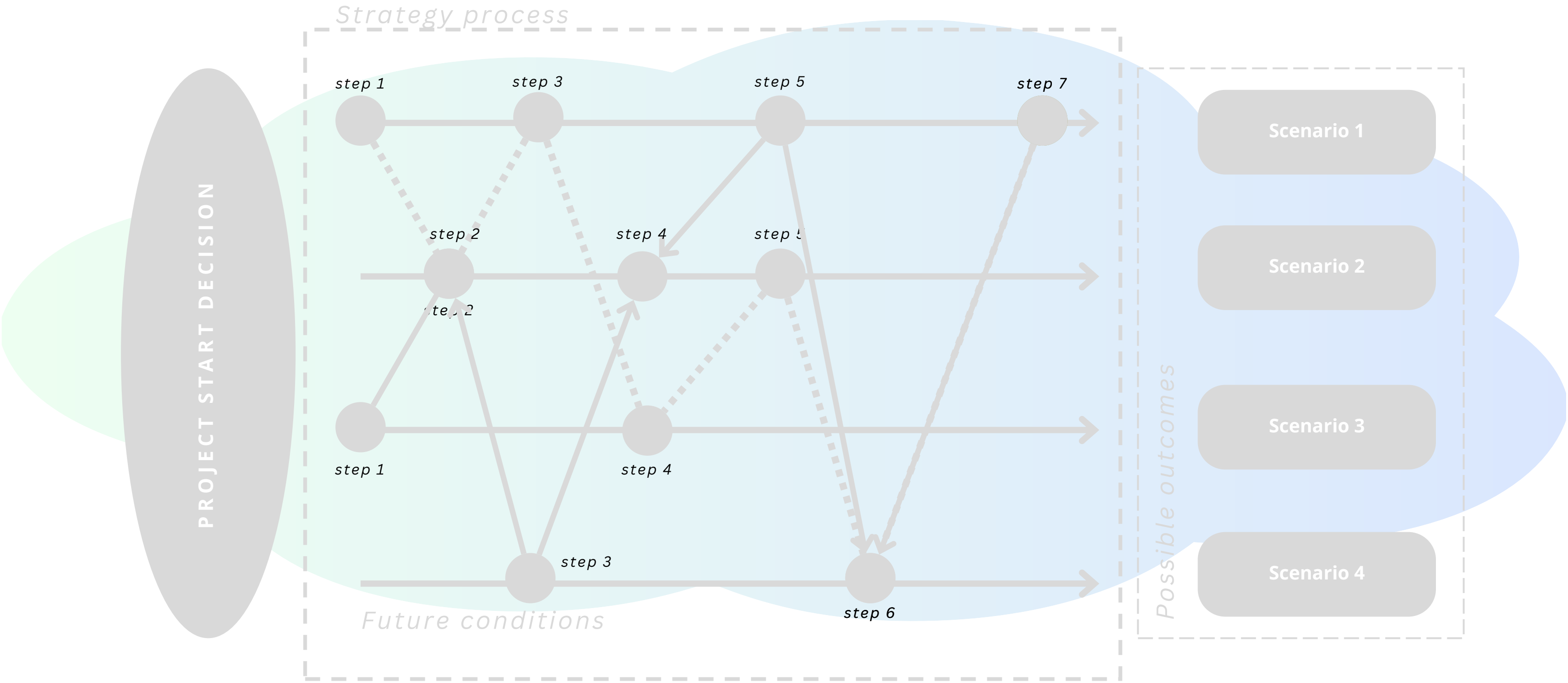
Future Studies



Future Studies



Future Studies



Results



(Gemeente Rotterdam, 2017)

Results

lack of clear scenario definitions in urban planning discussions

enable a more comprehensive and structured approach to long-term urban planning

gaps in stakeholder engagement

can foster a more collaborative, transparent decision-making process

highlights a tendency toward outcome-driven discussions

limits adaptability and create planning frameworks that are less flexible in the face of political or social changes

identifies challenges in integrating external factors

essential to consider not just local issues but also broader regional, national, and even global dynamics

*“How can strategic scenario thinking be **integrated** into Rotterdam's urban development process,*

Lack of Clear Scenario Definition

Incorporating clearer definitions of scenarios means building long-term, adaptable strategies that go beyond immediate concerns and provide a framework for dealing with future uncertainties.

Focus on Long-Term Strategic Thinking

Shifting from short-term operational concerns to long-term planning that considers various scenarios and how different factors (demographic, economic, environmental) may evolve.

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lack of active stakeholder involvement in decision-making

The results advocate for a more structured stakeholder inclusion, which would ensure that decision-making is not dominated by short-term operational concerns but includes long-term, inclusive planning.

Shift from Outcome-Driven to Process-Oriented Planning

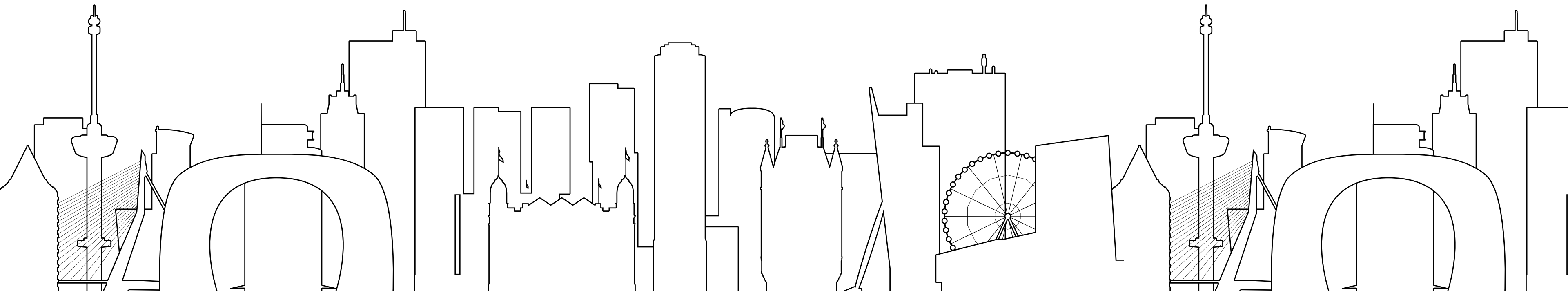
Adopting a scenario-building methodology could foster a planning environment that is less reactive and more proactive, anticipating potential challenges and political shifts.

External Dynamics and Political Sensitivity

More adaptive framework that is capable of responding to unforeseen changes, a necessity for managing politically sensitive projects that may face opposition or require compromise over time

Conclusion

Integrating **strategic scenario thinking** into Rotterdam's urban planning can create a more **adaptive, inclusive, and resilient** development process. By addressing key gaps—**clearer scenario methodologies, enhanced stakeholder engagement, a shift to process-oriented planning, and better integration of external dynamics**—the city can strengthen its approach to complex projects like Feyenoord City. Integrating scenario thinking provides a framework for proactive planning, broad collaboration, and adaptability to changing social, political, and economic landscapes.



THANK YOU

