

Abundance and Scarcity in Telecommunications Policy

Silicon Flatirons Flagship Conference
Feb. 2, 2026



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Note: The views expressed in this presentation are those of the author/presenter and do not necessarily represent the views of the Federal Communications Commission

Roadmap

1. Rival Mental Models

- Managed scarcity
- Abundance

2. Case Studies

- Net neutrality
- Spectrum management
- Satellite licensing
- Infrastructure deployment

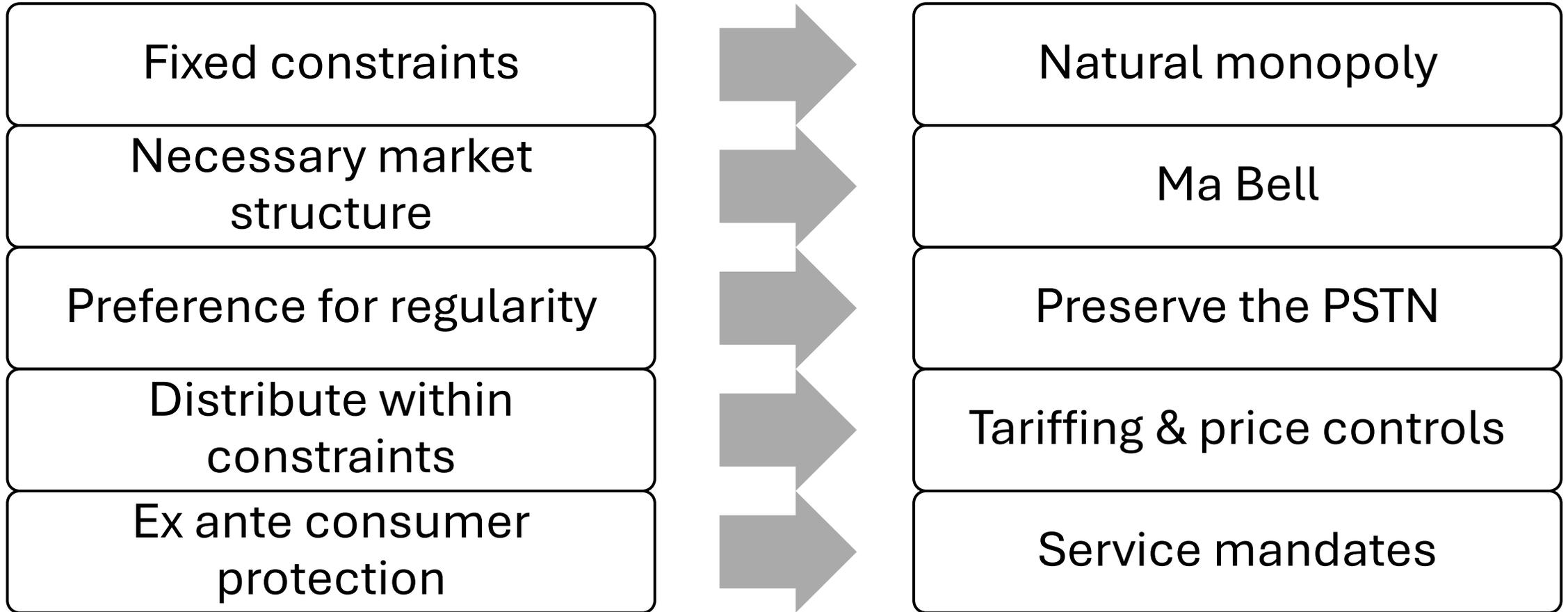
3. The Pathologies of Scarcity Thinking

4. The Abundance Reset

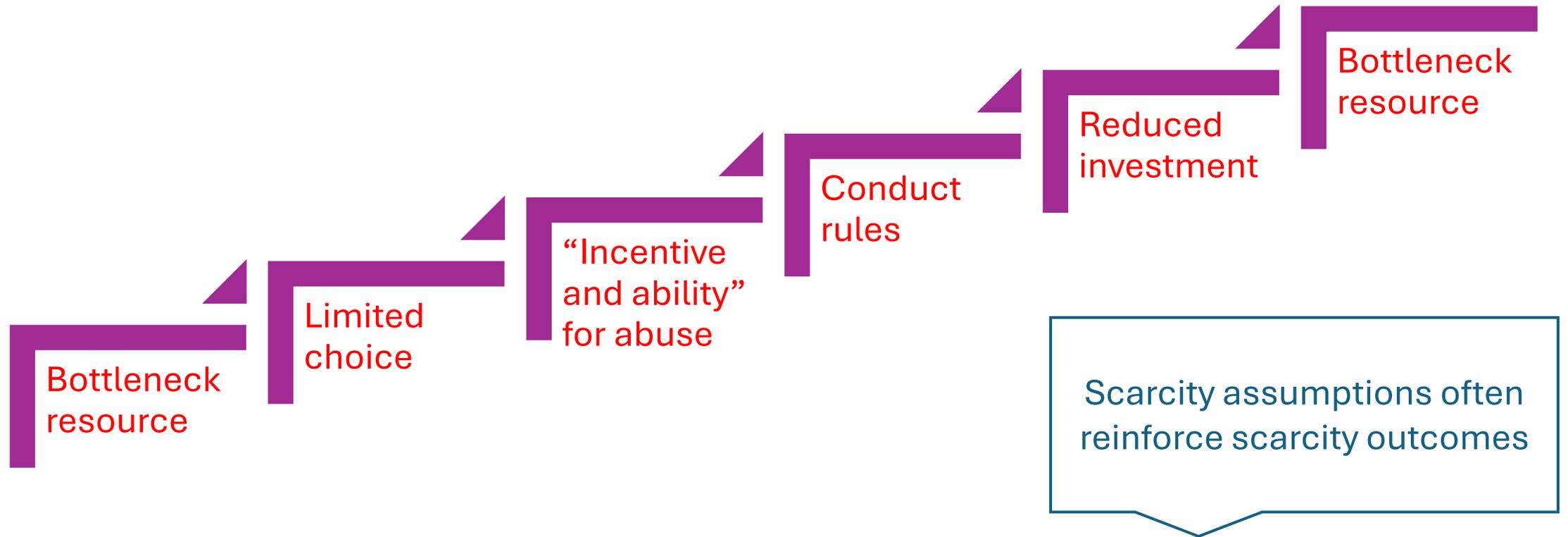
Rival Mental Models

	Managed Scarcity Paradigm	Abundance Paradigm
Resource Assumptions	Constraints are fixed in time	Constraints are often plastic
Optimal Market Structure	Known & necessary	Unknown & contingent
Attitude Toward Change	Preference for regularity	Comfort with uncertainty
Promoting Access	Distribute within constraints	Grow by eliminating constraints
Protecting Consumers	Ex ante mandates	Exit & choice

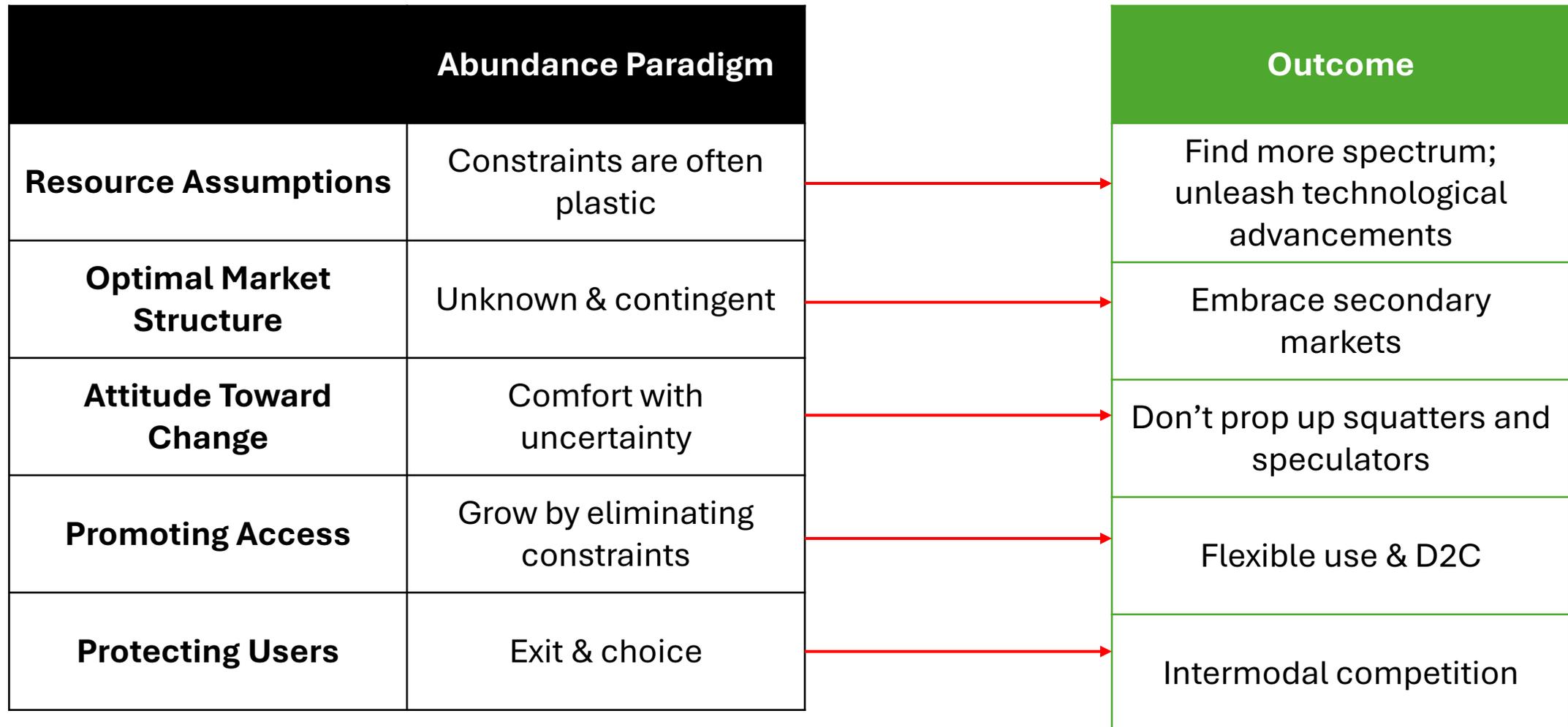
The Historical Antecedents of Managed Scarcity



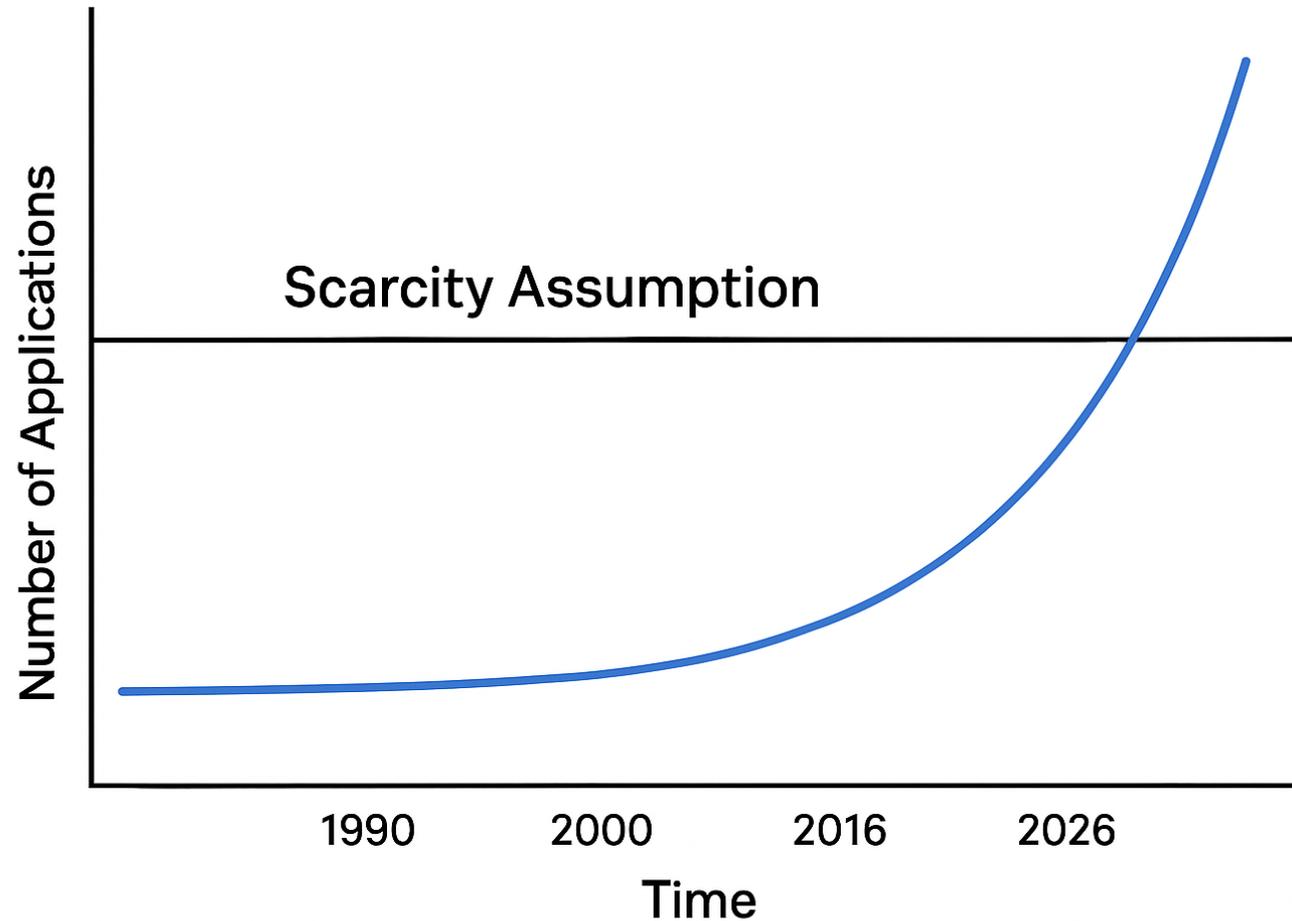
Case Study: Net Neutrality



Case Study: Spectrum Management

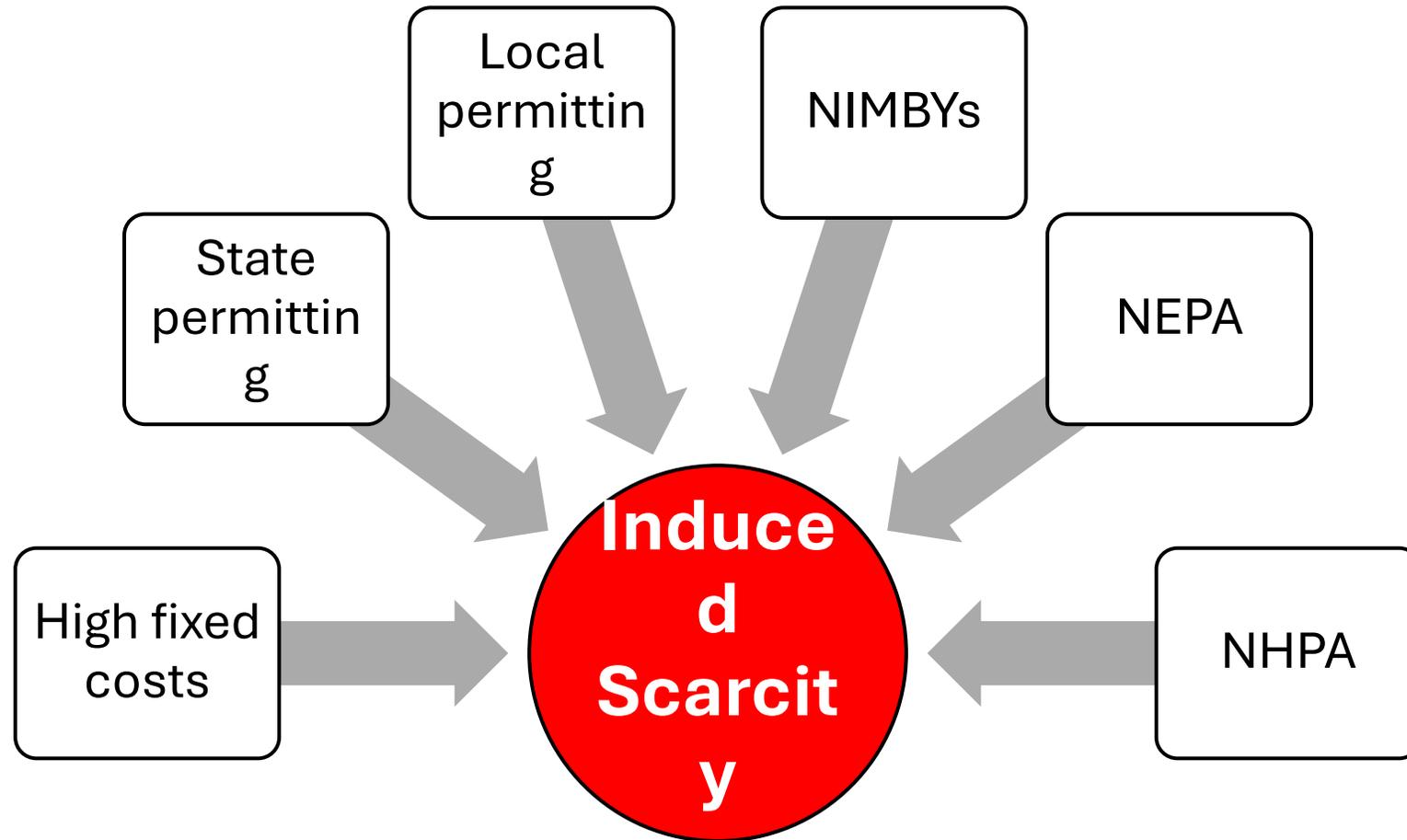


Case Study: Satellite Licensing



Legacy scarcity assumptions
delayed unforeseen abundance
in satellite launch and
manufacturing

Case Study: Infrastructure Deployment



The Pathologies of Scarcity Thinking

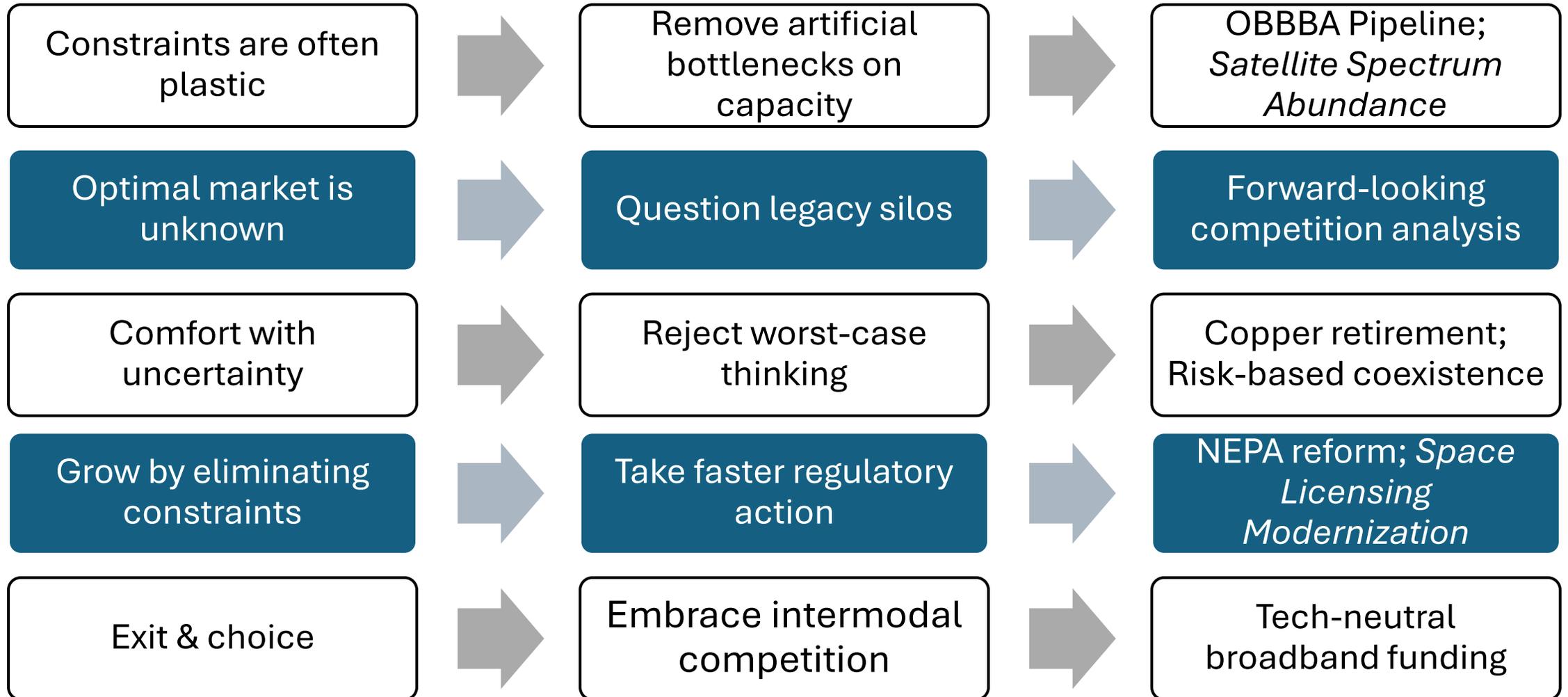
**Scarcity
institutions
persist beyond
scarcity
conditions**

**Opportunity
costs are hidden**

**Scarcity
assumptions tend
to be self-fulfilling**

**Suboptimal
resource
distribution**

The Abundance Reset



About Arpan

- Arpan Sura directs and oversees the FCC's domestic and international policy work on spectrum, space, and technology. He serves as Senior Counsel to FCC Chairman Carr on matters before the Wireless Bureau, the Space Bureau, the Office of Engineering and Technology, and the Office of International Affairs.
- Arpan separately holds the position of Chief AI Officer, leading strategic efforts to harness AI responsibly as the FCC digitally modernizes to enhance public services.
- Before joining then-Commissioner Carr's office in 2024, Arpan served as Senior Counsel to the Chief of the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau.
- For more than a decade before public service, Arpan represented telecom and tech companies in complex regulatory and litigation matters in private practice.
- Arpan graduated with distinction from William & Mary Law School and earned three undergraduate degrees from the University of Texas at Austin, including a B.S. in Computer Science. He can be reached at arpan.sura@fcc.gov.

