

ANALYTICAL PAPER · COMPARATIVE STUDY

Curtis Yarvin's Neocameralism versus Open Planning

Two digital models of the future

The state as a private corporation — and the state as an open planning system accountable to
its citizens

Analytical platform **gosplan2.ru**

Topic: digital governance, neo-reaction, post-capitalism

2026

Contents

1. Introduction: two answers to one diagnosis
2. Curtis Yarvin's neocameralism: how the model works
3. Open Planning 2.0: how the model works
4. Key differences between the systems (summary table)
5. Three forks where the models diverge
6. The key ideological contradiction
7. What the models share, and why demarcation is mandatory
8. Conclusion
9. Sources and a methodological note

1. Introduction: two answers to one diagnosis

Curtis Yarvin's neocameralism and the open planning system ("Gosplan 2.0") represent two fundamentally different views on the use of technology in government. Yet both start from **the same diagnosis**: the classical state is badly governed — slow, opaque, driven by distorted incentives and free of any real accountability for results.

Both propose rebuilding governance on technology, measurable indicators and a hard link between reward and outcome. From there their paths diverge radically, because they answer two central questions differently: **who sets the goals** and **who owns the result**.

Neocameralism is a far-right technocratic autocracy that turns the state into a private corporation; open planning is a left-democratic digital synthesis of plan and market, where technology serves society rather than the owners of capital. This paper examines both constructions, tabulates their differences, and shows why the demarcation between them is not an ideological quibble but an engineering necessity.

2. Curtis Yarvin's neocameralism: how the model works

Neocameralism is the concept of the American programmer and essayist **Curtis Yarvin** (pen name Mencius Moldbug), founder of the "neo-reactionary" current (NRx). Its key texts are the blog Unqualified Reservations (2007–2013) and the idea of **"Patchwork"**: a world divided into many small sovereign gov-corps.

The name refers back to cameralism — the administrative science of the absolutist states of the 17th and 18th centuries, where the treasury and the state were run as the sovereign's household. Yarvin transfers this logic into the digital age: the state becomes a **gov-corp**, a joint-stock company that owns a territory.

2.1. Core elements

- **Sovereignty as property.** The state is private property. Territory, land and infrastructure belong to shareholders, not to "the people".
- **Rule by a chief executive.** The country is run by a CEO appointed and removed by a board of directors. There is no separation of powers, no parliament and no general elections — these are treated as sources of inefficiency.
- **Residents as customers.** The population consists of consumers of security, law-and-order and infrastructure services. The relationship is governed by a service contract, not by political rights.
- **"Exit" instead of "voice".** The feedback mechanism is not voting but competition between jurisdictions: a dissatisfied resident moves to another gov-corp the way a customer switches providers. Bad management is punished by customer outflow and a falling asset value.

- **Corporate efficiency as the highest value.** Governance is modelled on the largest technology companies: a hard vertical, KPIs, monitoring, and cost optimization for the sake of share price growth.

2.2. The internal logic

Yarvin's argument runs as follows: democracy creates a free-rider problem at the level of sovereignty — nobody owns the state, so nobody has an interest in growing its long-term value. Give the country a real owner, and self-interest will align with good management: a shareholder will not ruin the asset they own.

The weak point of this logic is plain: **nothing guarantees that the owner's interest coincides with the resident's**. An owner maximizes the value of the asset, not the well-being of the people living on it, and these two quantities part ways wherever profit is extracted at the population's expense. The only defence the model leaves is the right to leave; but the right to leave is not the right to influence, and for most people it is economically out of reach.

3. Open Planning 2.0: how the model works

The open planning system starts from the same observation about bad governance but derives the opposite construction from it. The core idea is to **combine the strategic goals of the plan (frameworks, priorities, limits) with market coordination "on the ground"** through on-chain marketplaces for resources and contracts, making every movement of resources open and verifiable.

3.1. Core elements

- **Democratic goal-setting.** Goals, limits and priorities are set by a citizens' layer on a "one person — one vote" basis (assemblies, votes, protection against vote concentration), not by a token-weighted DAO, which would be plutocracy.
- **Public ownership of basic resources.** Infrastructure, land, data and key platforms remain in collective ownership; the rent they generate is not privatized.
- **Citizens as co-owners and controllers.** Budgets, KPIs, order statuses and acceptance criteria are public: a citizen sees where resources go without filing a request and without "commercial secrecy".
- **Technocracy as an executive layer.** Specialists calculate balances, design mechanisms and implement the plan, but they do not set its goals. This is the model's key constraint.
- **A hybrid of plan and market.** The centre sets the frame, while the actual allocation is done by quota auctions and contract marketplaces. This removes both the information overload of the centre and the volatility of a pure market.
- **Surplus goes to human domains.** The gains from automating routine are deliberately channelled into medicine, education and care, rather than into cutting employment for the

sake of savings.

3.2. The internal logic

The model separates two layers that technocratic projects usually blur: **goal-setting** and **execution**. Technology (smart contracts, oracles, telemetry, AI) belongs exclusively to the second layer — it makes execution verifiable and fast. The first layer remains political and democratic by construction. It is precisely this separation that protects the system from turning into what Yarvin describes.

4. Key differences between the systems

Criterion	Curtis Yarvin's neocameralism	Open Planning 2.0
Power and goal-setting	Absolute autocracy. The country is run by a chief executive (CEO). There is no separation of powers and no elections.	Direct democracy. Goals and limits are set by citizens on a "one person — one vote" basis.
Form of ownership	Private. The state is private property (a gov-corp). Land and resources belong to shareholders.	Public. Basic resources are held in collective ownership by the citizens.
Status of citizens	Customers. Residents are consumers of security and order services, with no vote.	Co-owners and controllers. Citizens openly see budgets and KPIs through a public ledger.
Role of technocracy	Total. Technocrats and top managers themselves decide where and how the state moves.	Executive only. Specialists implement the plan but do not set its goals.
Economic model	Corporate monopolism. Rigid centralized management modelled on the largest tech giants.	Hybrid. A strategic frame set by the centre combined with a free market of quotas and contracts "on the ground".
Instruments of control	Closed systems. Corporate monitoring and KPIs aimed at maximizing profit.	Public blockchain. Smart contracts, IoT telemetry and open NFT work orders for transparency.
Source of legitimacy	Property right: power is legitimate because the territory has been bought and is owned.	Citizens' mandate: power is legitimate as long as goals are approved by vote and execution is verifiable.
Feedback mechanism	"Exit": a dissatisfied resident can only move to another gov-corp — switch service providers.	"Voice": a citizen votes, triggers a revision of goals and an audit, without leaving the country.
Surplus from automation	Dividends to shareholders. Automation cuts costs and increases the owners' income.	Medicine, education, care. The surplus funds the humanization of labor and more human roles.

5. Three forks where the models diverge

The summary table collapses into three decisions. Everything else follows from them.

5.1. Who sets the goals

For Yarvin the goal-setting subject is the **owner**: the chief executive and the shareholders behind them. In open planning it is the **citizens**, through a democratic layer. Crucially, the

technological apparatus is identical in both cases: the same ledgers, the same KPIs, the same optimization algorithms. What differs is who assigns the objective function. Optimization is an empty operation until it is specified *what exactly* is being optimized and *in whose interest*.

5.2. Who owns the infrastructure

For Yarvin, the private owner of the gov-corp; in open planning, society. This answer decides who collects the rent from digital platforms, data and infrastructure. Digital systems have strong network effects and tend toward natural monopoly: whoever owns the coordination platform eventually gains the power to dictate terms to everyone else. The question of infrastructure ownership is therefore not a question of economic efficiency but of the distribution of power.

5.3. Which way transparency points

This difference is best stated as a direction of observation. In Yarvin's model, monitoring points **downward**: the corporation sees the residents — their behaviour, payments and risks. In open planning, transparency points **upward**: citizens see budgets, KPIs, contractors and acceptance criteria. Technically these are the same ledgers and the same telemetry; politically they are opposite constructions. "Transparency" without a specified direction is an empty word: total surveillance is also a form of transparency.

6. The key ideological contradiction

NEOCAMERALISM — NEO-FEUDALISM

In Yarvin's model, automation and digitalization lead to "neo-feudalism", where disenfranchised masses depend on the will of a board of directors and the efficiency of algorithms. Technology does not reduce the asymmetry of power — it entrenches it: whoever holds the capital holds sovereignty. Labor in such a system is a cost item that it is rational to cut; a person is valuable exactly to the extent that they contribute to the value of the asset.

OPEN PLANNING — HUMANIZATION OF LABOR

In the open planning system, blockchain and the automation of routine are used as instruments for humanizing labor. The surplus from digitalization is deliberately directed toward medicine, education and care, protecting society from the dictate of a techno-administrative class. Routine is automated so that the human is set free; domains where value is immeasurable are deliberately kept outside the rule of KPIs.

This contradiction does not reduce to a difference between "bad" and "good" intentions. It follows from the structure of the objective function. If a system optimizes asset value, cutting human roles is the rational move. If a system optimizes publicly approved goals, the very same automation gain becomes a resource for expanding human roles. One and the same technical gain produces opposite social consequences depending on who assigned the criterion.

7. What the models share, and why demarcation is mandatory

An honest comparison has to admit it: the two models share a common foundation, and that is exactly why they are easy to confuse.

- Both start from the premise that today's state is badly governed and that governance can be redesigned from scratch rather than merely "reformed at the edges".
- Both take measurable indicators, accountability for results and digital accounting tools seriously.
- Both rely on a technological apparatus that is ideologically neutral in itself: a smart contract serves a shareholder just as well as a citizens' assembly.
- Both criticize the bureaucratic opacity and slow feedback of existing institutions.

Hence the main practical conclusion: **without a democratic goal-setting layer and public ownership, digital planning is technically indistinguishable from a gov-corp.** Transparency, KPIs and smart contracts protect against nothing on their own — the only protection is who controls them and in whose interest the objective function was assigned.

This is the same conclusion the critique of technocracy arrives at, examined in a separate section of the platform: the main risk of digital planning is not technical (scalability, oracles, transaction costs) but **political** — the capture of goal-setting by a techno-administrative class. In this sense neocameralism is valuable as a *limiting case*: it shows what digital governance becomes if the democratic layer is deliberately removed. That is why it serves not only as an object of criticism but also as a stress test for our own model.

8. Conclusion

Neocameralism and open planning use a similar technological toolkit and arrive at opposite political outcomes. The difference is not in the algorithms but in who runs them and in whose interest.

That is why, in the open planning model, democratic goal-setting is not a decorative add-on or a rhetorical concession but a load-bearing structure. Remove it and you get exactly what Yarvin describes: a governance system that is efficient, transparent to its owner, and entirely opaque to the citizen.

The very same smart contract can be a shareholder's instrument or a citizen's instrument. Everything turns on one question: who sets the goal, and who owns the result.

9. Sources and a methodological note

C. Yarvin's position is presented on the basis of his public texts and is a reconstruction: neocameralism is a programmatic essay, not an implemented system. The comparison is therefore drawn between two *projects*, not between two functioning institutions, and is analytical in nature.

1. Curtis Yarvin (Mencius Moldbug). Unqualified Reservations, 2007–2013 — a cycle of essays, including "A Formalist Manifesto" and "Patchwork: A Political System for the 21st Century".
2. Hirschman A. O. Exit, Voice, and Loyalty. Harvard University Press, 1970 — the classical framework distinguishing "exit" from "voice", used in section 4.
3. Davydov D. A. Techno(crato)socialism: A Critical Look at the Ideas of B. King and R. Petty // Sociological Studies, No. 9, 2023.
4. Materials of the gosplan2.ru analytical platform: "The Open Planning System", "Answer to the Critique of Technocracy", "Weaknesses and Risks".

Prepared for the gosplan2.ru analytical platform. The full comparison is available in the "Curtis Yarvin" section of the website.