MPA Major Research Papers   Local Government Program

7-1-2020

Strategic Planning and Management in Mid-sized Ontario Municipalities: What factors contribute to successful adoption and implementation of strategic plans?

Lori Cruthers
Western University

Strategic Planning and Management in Mid-sized Ontario Municipalities

What factors contribute to successful adoption and implementation of strategic plans?

Subject keywords: Strategic Management

Geographical keywords: Ontario

MPA Research Report

Submitted to

The Local Government Program
Department of Political Science
The University of Western Ontario

Lori Cruthers
July 2020

Abstract

This research report focuses on the use of strategic planning and management practices in mid-sized municipalities in Ontario. The paper analyzes the adoption of strategic plans as well as the implementation of strategic management practices to determine what factors contribute to successful adoption and implementation of strategic plans. Bryson (2010) indicated that "significant improvements in strategic planning practice will come when 'it' is widely understood in its richness as a managerial practice or set of practices – and not as some kind of fairly rigid recipe for producing standardized objects called strategic plans that somehow are meant to implement themselves" (p. S259).

The research design consisted of a multi-stage review of qualitative facts from public documents. The primary focus of the first-stage was a high-level review of municipal websites for each of the 142 Ontario municipalities with populations ranging from 10,000 to 500,000 to determine the extent to which formal, strategic plans have been implemented. The second-stage expanded the data collection on a smaller subset of municipalities from the first-stage to evaluate the implementation success of strategic management practices as well as explore the inclusion of prioritization in strategic planning and management processes.

The research results found that there is a high percentage of local governments adopting strategic plans. The results also highlighted that there is a low percentage of municipalities linking strategic plans to strategic management practices. The research identified the following five factors that may contribute to higher levels of strategic planning adoption and strategic management implementation: stakeholder involvement, strategic plan components, prioritization of strategies, alignment of resource allocation, and evaluation processes.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Introduction

This research report focuses on the use of strategic planning and management practices in mid-sized local governments in Ontario. Bryson (2010) stated that "over the last 25 years, strategic planning has become a ubiquitous practice in U.S. governments and nonprofit organizations" (p. S255).

The research question for this paper is what factors contribute to successful adoption and implementation of strategic plans in mid-sized Ontario municipalities? This report analyzes the adoption of strategic plans as well as the implementation of strategic management practices in Ontario municipalities with populations ranging from 10,000 to 500,000. Poister & Streib (2005) indicated that "many public managers have embraced strategic planning, but it is unlikely to produce the benefits they anticipate unless they drive it through their budgeting, measurement, and performance management processes" (p. 46).

Strategic planning according to Bryson (2011) is "a deliberative, disciplined approach to producing fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization (or other entity) is, what it does, and why" (p. 7). Strategic planning is one of the three core components of strategic management. The remaining two components of strategic management are resource management as well as control and evaluation (Vinzant & Vinzant, 1996b). The purpose of strategic management according to Vinzant & Vinzant (1996a) "is to incorporate the products of the strategic planning process into the management processes or systems that exist in the organization" (p. 140). Bryson (2010) defines strategic management "as the appropriate and reasonable integration of strategic planning and implementation across an organization (or other entity) in an ongoing way to enhance the fulfillment of mission, meeting of mandates, continuous learning, and sustained creation of public value" (p. S256). Vinzant & Vinzant (1996b) stated

that "strategic management exists when organizations move beyond planning to develop mechanisms for the implementation of strategies" (p. 202).

The primary research aim of this research report is to evaluate the strategic management processes in mid-size municipalities in Ontario to determine how many municipalities have adopted strategic plans and how many municipalities have successfully implemented strategic management practices across the organization. The adoption of strategic plans will be measured by the existence of a formal document defining the organization's mission, vision, and mandates. Bryson (2010) states that "strategic planning at its best involves reasonably deliberative and disciplined work around clarifying organizational purposes and the requirements and likely strategies for success" (p. S257).

The definition of a successful implementation of strategic management according to Vinzant & Vinzant (1996a) "must (a) include both internal and external factors and (b) be sufficiently specific to allow comparability between organizations but broad enough to allow for variations in approach" (p. 141). Vinzant and Vinzant developed a strategic management capacity framework consisting of four levels of implementation success to address the two requirements. This research report uses the framework developed by Vinzant and Vinzant to evaluate the implementation success of strategic management processes in mid-sized Ontario municipalities. Vinzant & Vinzant (1996b) identified that the "successful implementation of strategic management requires an assessment of organizational capacities in such areas as managerial capability, power structure, culture, leadership, and organizational structure" (p. 203).

The secondary research aim of this research report is descriptive. The research paper provides an overview of strategic planning and strategic management practices in the context of

the public sector. Poister et al. (2010) stated that "a shared sense of strategy is of fundamental importance to public managers because it is essential for positioning an organization to face a complex and uncertain future" (p. 524).

Strategic planning and management processes can provide numerous benefits for elected officials and municipal administrators. Some of the benefits include clarification of organizational mission, enhanced decision making processes, as well as improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of municipal service delivery (Bryson, 2010). These benefits will be realized when the strategic planning processes are understood, adopted and implemented by all stakeholders. According to Poister & Streib (2005) when the strategic planning practice is understood and adopted, "it permeates the culture of an organization, creating an almost intuitive sense of where it is going and what is important" (p. 46).

The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) for the District of Tofino highlighted the importance and complexity of strategic planning processes for local governments. The CAO expressed to the Centre for Sustainability Whistler (2019) that "developing a strategic plan is one of the most important and sometimes elusive tasks for Councils and their management teams". The significance of this quotation is that the importance of developing the strategic plan might explain why municipalities are adopting strategy plans and the elusiveness might contribute to the lower implementation success for strategic management processes in local governments. Statistics Canada reported the population of District of Tofino in 2016 was 30,981 (Statistics Canada, 2019). The District of Tofino would be classified as a mid-size municipality similar to the sample used for this research report.

The hypothesis of this research report is that there will be a high percentage of mid-size Ontario municipalities that have adopted strategic plans as well as a low percentage of mid-size

Ontario municipalities that are connecting strategic plans to strategic management processes such as budgeting, performance appraisals, and performance measurement. This lack of connection to processes associated with resource management as well as control and evaluation suggests that there will be a lower level of implementation success for strategic management practices in mid-size Ontario municipalities. The hypothesis is similar to the research results reported by Poister and Streib in 2005 and Johnsen in 2016. The low percentage of municipalities aligning strategic plans to strategic management processes such as resource allocation and performance measurement has been identified as one of criticisms of strategic planning in local governments (Poister & Streib, 2005).

Literature Review

The literature review for this research report focused on academic journal articles, municipal strategic planning documents, council reports, newspaper articles and content from municipal websites. The selection of academic journals was based on the relevance to strategic planning, strategic management, performance measurement, performance management, and local government. The academic journals provided an overview of strategic planning and strategic management concepts including published research on the adoption of strategic plans, the implementation of strategic management processes, and best practices for implementing strategic management processes in the local governments.

The literature review included several academic journal articles and one book published by John Bryson. Bryson has published numerous journal articles as well as five books on leadership, strategic planning, strategic management, and organizational change. Bryson published an academic journal article in 2010 that provided an overview of strategic planning and strategic management concepts, outlined the evolution of strategic planning over the past

twenty-five years, and provided predictions for strategic management practices for the next ten years.

Strategic planning according to Bryson (2010) "is not any one thing, but it instead an adaptable set of concepts, procedures, tools, and practices intended to help people and organizations figure out what they should be doing, how, and why" (p. S257). Strategic planning is the cornerstone component of strategic management. The two supporting components of strategic management are resource management as well as control and evaluation. The outcomes of strategic management as identified by Vinzant & Vinzant (1996a) "include a clearer understanding and commitment from all employees to the mission and strategic aims of the organization, improved employee morale, and the increased productivity that synergism produces" (p. 152).

Strategic planning and strategic management were viewed as private sector functions until the 1980s when local government officials as well as senior administrators started to embrace the possibilities that strategic planning could bring to public sector organizations. Bryson (2010) reported that "strategic planning has now become a conventional feature of most governments and nonprofit organizations" (p. S258). Local governments are starting to integrate strategic planning with the elements of strategic management. Bryson (2010) predicts that "major attention will be focused on highlighting and resolving issues of alignment so that coherent, consistent, persuasive, and effective patterns are established across mission, policies, budgets, strategies, competencies, actions, and results" (p. S262).

The literature research review included journal articles to support the development of the research design and methodology. The review included the *Public Productivity & Management Review* article on Strategy and Organizational Capacity. The journal authors, Douglas Vinzant

and Janet Vinzant, proposed a framework to evaluate the success level for the implementation of strategic management in public organizations. Figure 1 illustrates the four levels of the strategic management capacity framework.

Level 4: Inclusion of Control and Evaluation Processes in Strategic Management

Level 3: Alignment of Budgeting and Resource Allocation with Strategic Planning

Level 2: Completion of Strategic Planning Document

Level 1: Implementation of a Strategic Planning Process
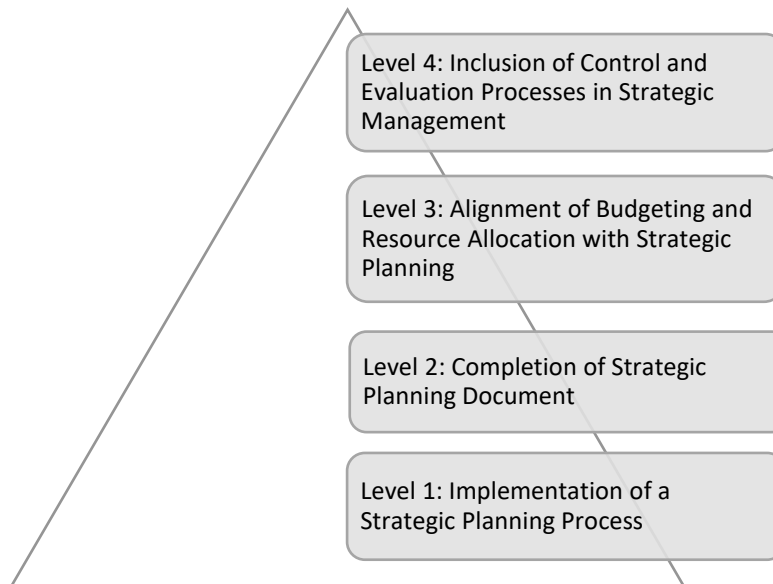
Figure 1. Strategic Management Capacity Framework (Vinzant & Vinzant, 1996a).

Level one is the successful implementation of a strategic planning process. Vinzant & Vinzant (1996) explained that "a strategic planning process entails mission review, stakeholder analysis, clarification of organizational mandates, systematic evaluation of an organization's internal and external environments, identification of strategic issues, strategy development, and development of an organization's vision statement" (p. 140). Level two is the successful accomplishment of level one as well as the completion of a strategic planning document. Vinzant & Vinzant (1996a) indicated "the discipline of producing a document, particularly one that can be used to market the organization's products and services to external audiences, is a more sophisticated achievement" (p. 141). Level three is the successful achievement of levels one and two as well as the alignment of resource allocation to strategic plans. The successful completion

of level three according to Vinzant & Vinzant (1996a) occurs when the "allocation of resources (human, financial, physical, and technological) in the operating and capital budgets is tied to the accomplishment of specific strategies within specified time periods" (p. 141). Level four of the strategic management capacity framework builds on the successful achievement of level three with the inclusion of control and evaluation processes. Vinzant & Vinzant (1996a) indicated that "only Level 4 represents the implementation of a comprehensive strategic management approach, including strategic planning, resource allocation, and control and evaluation processes" (p. 141). The strategic management capacity framework will assist with the analysis of strategic management implementations in mid-sized Ontario municipalities.

The literature review included two academic journal articles that reported on surveys to assess the adoption and impacts of strategic planning and strategic management in the public sector. The research published by Poister and Streib in 2005 focused on all municipalities in the United States with populations of 25,000 or more. The research published by Johnsen in 2016 focused on all municipalities in Norway. Both academic journal articles contributed to the development of the research design and methodology as well as provided comparison results for the analysis components of this research paper.

Poister and Streib conducted a survey on a non-probability sample of all municipalities in United States with populations of 25,000 or more. Strategic planning according to Poister & Streib (2005) "blends futuristic thinking, objective analysis, and subjective evaluation of goals and priorities to chart a future course of action that will ensure the organization's vitality and effectiveness in the long run" (p. 46). Poister and Streib analyzed and categorized the survey questions into three groups: implementation of strategic planning, use of strategic planning elements, and impacts of strategic planning.

The first two groups of survey questions focused on strategic planning, budgeting, performance management, and municipal measurement processes. Poister & Streib (2005) reported that 44 percent of the survey respondents "had initiated formal, citywide strategic planning over the past five years" (p. 47). Strategic planning elements were measured using the strategic management capacity model developed by Vinzant and Vinzant in 1996. Poister and Streib reported that 22 percent of the sample municipalities attained level four on the strategic management capacity model.

The third survey group measured the impacts of strategic planning using nineteen Likert scale questions. The most frequently cited benefits of the survey respondents included the focus on municipal goals and priorities, clarification of mission, improvements in decision making processes for allocation of municipal resources, and enhanced external relations with citizens and stakeholders. Poister & Streib (2005) reported a large majority of municipal managers that implemented strategic plans "affirmed the benefits generated by strategic planning outweighed the costs of undertaking these efforts" (p. 54).

The findings of Poister and Streib support the continued growth and development of strategic planning and strategic management at the local government level in the United States. Poister & Streib (2005) stated that "among cities that engage in strategic planning, high percentages also report the use of particular budgeting, performance management, and measurement practices aimed at implementing strategic plans effectively" (p. 54). The survey findings indicated a high satisfaction rate from managers on the implementation of strategic plans and the achievement of strategic objectives. The high level of satisfaction associated with the implementation of strategic planning aligns with the research done by Bryson.

Johnsen conducted a survey on all municipalities in Norway as of November 2011. Johnsen (2016) stated that the purpose of the journal article was "to describe the adoption and impacts of strategic planning and management in Norwegian local government" (p. 336). This journal article was selected because Johnsen replicated components from the survey instrument developed by Poister and Streib. Johnsen (2016) indicated that "the Poister and Streib's (2005) survey instrument was shortened and some of the questions adapted in order to fit the Norwegian context" (p. 342).

Johnsen (2016) identified that "the population for this study was the 430 municipalities in Norway as of November 2011" (p. 345). The survey design was multiple-informant with surveys sent to three senior officials at each of the 430 municipalities. Johnsen (2016) reported that "the final sample consisted of 176 of the 430 municipalities, resulting in a response rate of 41 percent" (p. 346).

The survey results according to Johnsen (2016) found "that 57 percent of the 176 municipalities that responded had initiated or completed one or more strategic planning documents" (p. 347). Similar to Poister and Streib, Johnsen used the strategic management capacity model developed by Vinzant and Vinzant to measure success levels for the implementation of strategic planning elements. Johnsen (2016) estimated "that 22 percent of the 176 responding municipalities belonged to level 4" (p 354). The percentage estimate for level four implementation success matched the percentage reported by Poister and Streib in 2005. The results from both studies support the hypothesis for this report that there will be a lower percentage of local governments aligning strategic plans to management practices as such as resource allocation, performance management, and performance measurement.

The findings of Johnsen support the hypothesis of this research report for a high percentage of strategic plan adoption among mid-sized Ontario municipalities. Johnsen (2016) reported that "our results indicate that strategic planning and management in municipal governments is now being widely adopted" (p. 358). The findings of the journal article also included the impacts of strategic planning processes in Norwegian local governments. Johnsen (2016) stated "overall, the practitioners who responded to our survey, most of whom were top municipal managers, perceived the impacts of strategic planning and management positively" (p. 362).

The literature review also included an academic journal article written by Elbanna, Andrews, and Pollanen in 2015 based on their 2012 survey of 150 public service organizations in Canada. Elbanna et al. (2015) explained that the purpose of their survey was to "examine the relationship between strategic planning and strategy implementation success, the mediating role of managerial involvement and the moderating role of stakeholder uncertainty using data drawn from a survey of senior public sector managers in Canada" (p. 1019). The survey findings suggested that formal strategic planning activities have a strong impact on the implementation success of strategic management processes in public sector organizations. The findings also suggested the involvement of senior managers could lead to successful strategic management implementation. Elbanna et al. (2015) observed "one of the outcomes of this involvement is the enhancement of managers' commitment to and alignment with public policy and organizational priorities, in addition to helping managers in acquiring the knowledge necessary for strategy implementation, which in turn increases the possibility of its success" (p. 1036). The survey findings also noted the potential benefit of formal strategic planning in public organizations with large numbers of diverse stakeholders.

A journal article written by Bert George in 2017 focusing on the organizational behaviours underlying the strategic planning processes was included in the literature review. George based his research on three empirical studies of Flemish municipalities as well as five interviews with expert stakeholders. George (2017) suggested that strategic planning "is more than a fad and can contribute to positive outcomes" (p. 527).

The empirical studies according to George (2017) "suggest that strategic planning can produce positive outcomes when a variety of both internal (for example lower-level staff) and external (for example citizens) stakeholders are included in the strategic planning process" (p. 529). The expert interviews conducted by George (2017) also supported the inclusion of internal and external stakeholders in strategic planning processes as it "illustrates that the strategic planning process is broadly supported throughout the organization and not just a top-down process" (p. 529).

The findings reported by George as well as Elbanna, Andrews, and Pollanen support the inclusion of stakeholder analysis in the design of this research paper. The first and second stages of the research design will collect information on the stakeholders engaged in the strategic planning activities. Bryson (2011) stated "stakeholder analyses are so critical because the key to success in the public and nonprofit sectors – and the private sector, too, for that matter – is the satisfaction of key stakeholders" (p. 132).

Research Design and Method

Bryson (2010) indicated that "significant improvements in strategic planning practice will come when 'it' is widely understood in its richness as a managerial practice or set of practices – and not as some kind of fairly rigid recipe for producing standardized objects called strategic plans that somehow are meant to implement themselves" (p. S259). The research design for this

paper reviewed strategic planning documents as well as council reports, annual reports, and municipal websites to analyze the adoption of strategic planning processes and the implementation success of strategic management practices in mid-size local governments in Ontario. The objectives for the research design are:

1) Examine the extent to which formal, strategic plans have been implemented among mid-sized Ontario municipalities

2) Evaluate the implementation of strategic management to determine level of success in mid-sized Ontario municipalities that have implemented strategic plans

3) Explore the inclusion of prioritization in strategic planning and strategic management processes in mid-sized Ontario municipalities that have implemented strategic plans

The research design used a multi-stage sample. Multi-stage sampling as defined by Battaglia (2008b) is when "the target population of elements is divided into first-stage units, often referred to as primary sampling units (PSUs), which are the ones sampled first" (p. 2). The primary sampling units for the first-stage of the research design is all Ontario municipalities with populations ranging from 10,000 to 500,000 based on the 2016 population and dwelling counts reported by Statistics Canada. The total sampling units for the first-stage is 142 municipalities and represents a cross-sectional snapshot of mid-sized municipalities in Ontario as of December, 2019.

Figure 2 shows the distribution of the first-stage sample units by census subdivision type. Statistics Canada (2019) defines census subdivision as "the general term for municipalities (as determined by provincial/territorial legislation) or areas treated as municipal equivalents for statistical purposes". Towns represent over half of the sample municipalities. Cities are the next

largest classification in the sample with 31 percent of the sample group of municipalities. The

Municipality classification represents the smallest group with 14 percent of the sample.
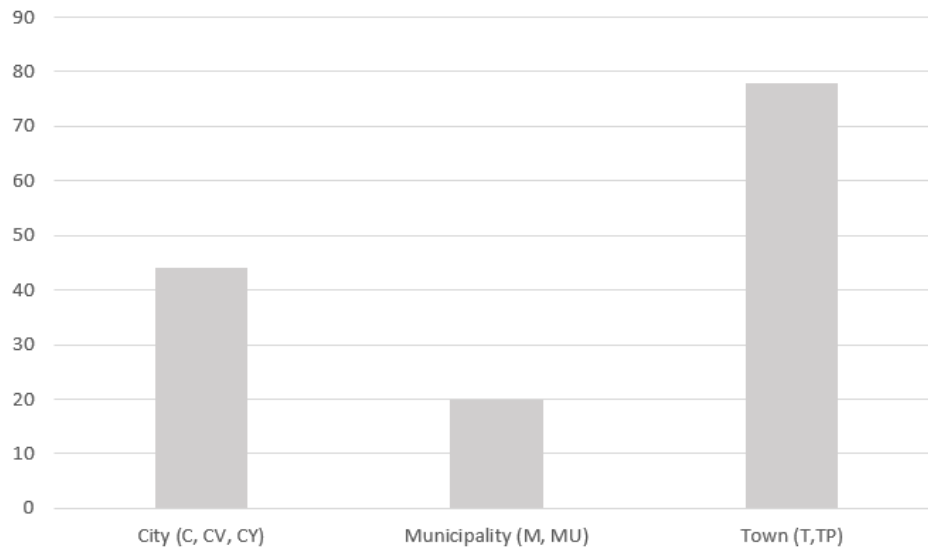
Figure 2. First-Stage Sample Distribution Breakdown by Census Subdivision Type

Figure 3 displays the distribution of the first-stage sample by population grouping. The

distribution highlights that 85 percent of sample municipalities have less than 100,001 residents.

The largest population grouping of the sample is the 44 municipalities with population sizes

ranging from 10,000 to 15,000 residents. This population group represents 31 percent of the

sample.
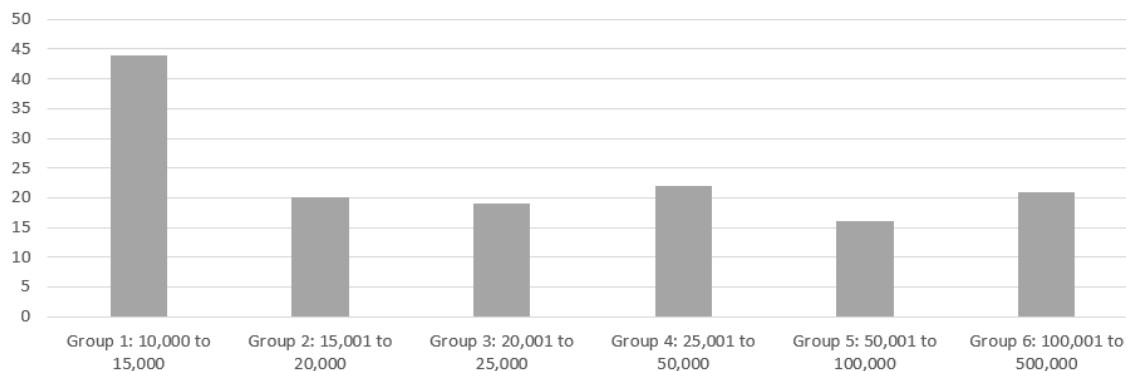
Figure 3. First-Stage Sample Distribution Breakdown by Population Groups

The primary focus of the first-stage of the multi-stage sample is the analysis of the level

of adoption of strategic plans. The secondary focus is a high-level website review of strategic

planning elements and strategic management practices to provide a rough estimate of the success level for strategic management implementation.

The first-stage analysis consisted of a high-level review of each of the 142 municipal websites. The evaluation criteria for the first-stage of the research design is included in Appendix A and consists of eleven closed-ended questions that have been grouped into the four success levels of the strategic management capacity framework. Each of the eleven questions have a yes or no response. The data collection spreadsheet for the first-stage is included in Appendix B. The data collection for the first-stage was conducted in December 2019. The large-N case selection for the first-stage enhanced the reliability of the research findings as each mid-sized Ontario municipality is included in the website review. The results from the total population sample review assisted with determining the size of the second-stage sample.

The second-stage of the multi-stage sample according to Battaglia (2008b) occurs when "the selected first-stage sampling units are then divided into smaller second-stage sampling units, often referred to as secondary sampling units (SSUs), which are sampled second" (p. 2). The secondary sampling units will be a subset of first-stage municipalities that that have adopted a formal strategic planning document and have achieved an implementation success level of one or higher for strategic management practices. The second-stage of the multi-stage sample expands the data collection on a smaller sample size to further analyze the implementation success level of strategic management practices as well as determine if the strategic management processes included prioritization.

The evaluation criteria for the second-stage of the research design is included in Appendix C. The criteria will assist with the ranking of each municipality's strategic management implementation as well as gather information on the prioritization of strategies. The

evaluation criteria replicates a subset of survey questions from the survey of American municipalities conducted by Poister and Streib as well as the survey of Norwegian municipalities conducted by Johnsen. The replication of questions from two previous surveys provides comparison data as well as provides external validation of the research design.

The evaluation criteria for the second-stage includes 37 closed-ended questions that have been grouped into five categories: strategic planning activities, strategic planning document, resource allocation alignment, control and evaluation inclusion, and inclusion of prioritization. The use of closed-ended questions will ensure consistency in the data collection and reduce the bias from the researcher. The worksheet identified in Appendix C captures the criteria and associated value as well as supporting information including document links, website addresses, and notes from the researcher. The data collection spreadsheet for the second-stage sample is included in Appendix D.

Data Analysis – First-Stage

The research design identified that the qualitative facts from public documents will provide the sources of information for the data analysis. The public documents included council reports, annual reports, and information from municipal websites. The research did not involve human subjects. Analysis of the data collected from the public documents will determine if strategic plans have been adopted in mid-sized Ontario municipalities as well as measure the success level of the implementation of strategic management in mid-sized Ontario municipalities.

The first-stage analysis will collect data to determine if mid-sized Ontario municipalities have adopted the use of strategic plans. The adoption of strategic plans is determined by the existence of formal strategic planning documents on the municipal websites. The total

percentage of adoption of strategic plans will be compared to the reported sample percentages from the surveys conducted by Poister and Streib as well as Johnsen.

The first-stage data collection and analysis will also include the estimation of the implementation success level for the strategic management processes based on the high-level review of the strategic planning information on the municipality's website. The high-level review includes searching each municipality's strategic planning and budget webpages as well as strategic planning documents for the presence of the following eleven strategic planning elements and strategic management practices: mission, vision, organizational mandates, stakeholder analysis, Strengths Weakness Opportunities Threats (SWOT) analysis, identification of issues, identification of strategies, formal strategic planning document, published budget documents, inclusion of resource strategies in the strategic plan, and published strategic plan performance measurements. The analysis can only determine an estimate of the implementation success level as it is possible that some of strategic planning elements and strategic management practices may have been conducted by the municipality but not reported on their website. One example is the City of London where the website and supporting strategic planning document did not include information on the stakeholder engagement sessions. The strategic plan staff report presented to the Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee on April 1, 2019 included information as well as feedback from the community engagement activities (City of London, 2019).

The analysis of the first-stage data leveraged Microsoft Excel to provide distribution statistics for mid-sized Ontario municipalities that have adopted a formal strategic plan. Table 1 provides the breakdown of municipalities with and without a formal strategic planning document. The first-stage sample contains 109 municipalities that have a formal strategic planning document accessible on their municipal website.

Formal Strategic Plan accessible on website	Count	Percentage
Yes	109	77%
No	33	23%

Table 1. First-Stage sample – Ontario Municipalities with a Formal Strategic Planning Document

Table 2 shows the breakdown of municipalities with a formal strategic planning document by census subdivision type. The Municipality census subdivision type has a lower adoption percentage than City and Town types. There are ten out of the total sample of twenty Municipality census subdivision types with a formal strategic plan. The City census subdivision type has 82 percent adoption of formal strategic planning documents and Town census subdivision type has 81 percent adoption.

Formal Strategic Document Exists	Count	Percentage of Sample Subdivision Type
City (C, CV, CY)	36	82%
Municipality (M, MU)	10	50%
Town (T,TP)	63	81%
Total Municipalities with a Formal Strategic Planning Document	**109**	

Table 2. Census Subdivision Type Breakdown of Ontario Municipalities with a Formal Strategic Plan

A review of the notes collected for the 33 municipalities without formalized strategic plans found that 6 municipalities referenced a strategic plan but the formal plan was not accessible on their website and 6 municipalities indicated that they were actively working on a strategic plan.

Table 3 provides the breakdown by population distribution groups for municipalities with a formal strategic planning document. The adoption percentages range from 69 percent to 95 percent across the population groups. The lowest adoption percentage of 69 percent belongs to the group of municipalities with populations of 50,001 to 100,000. This population group has 11 municipalities with formal strategic planning documents out of the sample size of 16 municipalities. The population group with the highest adoption percentage was the group of municipalities with populations of 100,001 to 500,000. This population group has 20 out of the

sample size of 21 with formal strategic planning documents. The high adoption rate for municipalities with populations over 100,000 supports the observation from Johnsen (2016) that "larger municipalities may need more formal strategic management than smaller municipalities" (p. 359).

Formal Strategic Document Exists	Count	Percentage of Sample Population Group
Group 1: 10,000 to 15,000	31	70%
Group 2: 15,001 to 20,000	15	75%
Group 3: 20,001 to 25,000	14	74%
Group 4: 25,001 to 50,000	18	82%
Group 5: 50,001 to 100,000	11	69%
Group 6: 100,001 to 500,000	20	95%
Total Municipalities with a Formal Strategic Planning Document	**109**	

Table 3. Population Breakdown of Ontario Municipalities with a Formal Strategic Plan

The estimation of the success level for the implementation of strategic management processes in mid-sized Ontario municipalities is based on the existence of the following eleven strategic planning elements and strategic management practices: mission, vision, organizational mandates, stakeholder analysis, SWOT analysis, identification of issues, identification of strategies, formal strategic planning document, published budget documents, inclusion of resource strategies in the strategic plan, and published strategic plan performance measurements. The eight strategic planning elements and three strategic management practices are referenced by the strategic management capacity framework developed by Vinzant and Vinzant.

The five possible values for the implementation success level are zero for no implementation or an incomplete implementation of a strategic planning process, one for the implementation of a strategic planning process, two for the completion of a strategic planning document, three for the alignment of resource allocation with strategic planning, and four for the inclusion of control and evaluation processes in strategic management. If the first seven strategic planning elements are present, the municipality has achieved level one. If any of the first seven

strategic planning elements are not present, the municipality is classified as a level zero. If all

eight strategic planning elements are present, the municipality has achieved level two. If all eight

strategic planning elements and the first strategic management practices are present, the

municipality may have achieved level three. If all eight strategic planning elements and all three

strategic management practices are present, the municipality may have achieved level four. Level

three and four classifications require a more comprehensive evaluation to validate

implementation success level. The main purpose of the high-level review of the first-stage is to

assist with the sample selection technique for the second-stage sample.

Each of the eight strategic planning elements and three strategic management practices

have been analyzed for each of the 142 municipalities. Tables 4 through 10 display the

breakdowns for each of the seven strategic planning elements. Tables 1, 2, and 3 provide analysis

for the eighth strategic element, the formal strategic planning document. The strategic planning

elements most frequently present in the sample group are organizational mandates (80 percent),

vision statement (79 percent), and strategic planning document (77 percent). The three elements

with the lowest presence in the sample group are SWOT analysis (25 percent), identification of

issues (25 percent), and stakeholder analysis (53 percent).

Presence of Mission Statement?	Count	Percentage
Yes	99	70%
No	43	30%

Table 4. First-Stage Sample – Mission Statement

Presence of Vision Statement?	Count	Percentage
Yes	112	79%
No	30	21%

Table 5. First-Stage Sample – Vision Statement

Presence of Organizational Mandates?	Count	Percentage
Yes	113	80%
No	29	20%

Table 6. First-Stage Sample – Organizational Mandates

Presence of Stakeholder Analysis?	Count	Percentage
Yes	75	53%
No	67	47%

Table 7. First-Stage Sample – Stakeholder Analysis

Presence of SWOT?	Count	Percentage
Yes	35	25%
No	107	75%

Table 8. First-Stage Sample – Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats

Identification of Strategic Issues?	Count	Percentage
Yes	35	25%
No	107	75%

Table 9. First-Stage Sample –Identification of Strategic Issues

Identification of Strategies?	Count	Percentage
Yes	108	76%
No	34	24%

Table 10. First-Stage Sample –Identification of Strategies

Tables 11, 12, and 13 provide breakdowns for each of the three strategic management practices: budgeting, resource allocation, and performance measurements. Table 11 displays the accessibility of budget information and represents the highest percentage practice in the first-stage sample group. There were 132 municipalities that published budget documents on their websites. Table 12 highlights that the lowest percentage practice among municipalities was the inclusion of resource allocation strategies in the strategic plan. There were 17 municipalities that included resource allocation in their strategic plan. The accessibility of strategic plan performance measurements is displayed in Table 13. There were 28 municipalities that published strategic plan performance measurements. The higher focus on publishing performance measurements compared to the focus on resource allocation strategies may be in response to the drive to increase local government transparency through the measuring and reporting of performance information.

Budget Documents Accessible on Website?	Count	Percentage
Yes	132	93%
No	10	7%

Table 11. First-Stage Sample – Accessibility of Budget Information

Strategic Plan includes resource strategies?	Count	Percentage
Yes	17	12%
No	125	88%

Table 12. First-Stage Sample – Resource Strategies

Strategic Plan performance measurements published on website?	Count	Percentage
Yes	28	20%
No	114	80%

Table 13. First-Stage Sample – Accessibility of Strategic Plan Performance Measures

Figure 4 displays the distribution by success level for the implementation of strategic management practices according to the strategic management capacity framework developed by Vinzant and Vinzant. The breakdown for the first-stage sample group is: one municipality achieving level four, five municipalities achieving level three, eighteen municipalities achieving level two, eighteen municipalities achieving level one, and one hundred and twenty-four municipalities classified as level zero. The level zero breakdown highlights that 87 percent of the first-stage sample did not achieve level one classification. The low percentage of municipalities achieving level one through four classifications may be related to the data collection methods. There is a possibility that municipalities in the first-stage sample did not publish information related to the strategic planning and strategic management practices on their websites.

Level 4: Inclusion of Control and Evaluation Processes (1%)

Level 3: Alignment of Budgeting and Resource Allocation (4%)

Level 2: Completion of Strategic Planning Document (13%)

Level 1: Strategic Planning Process (13%)

Level 0: (87%)
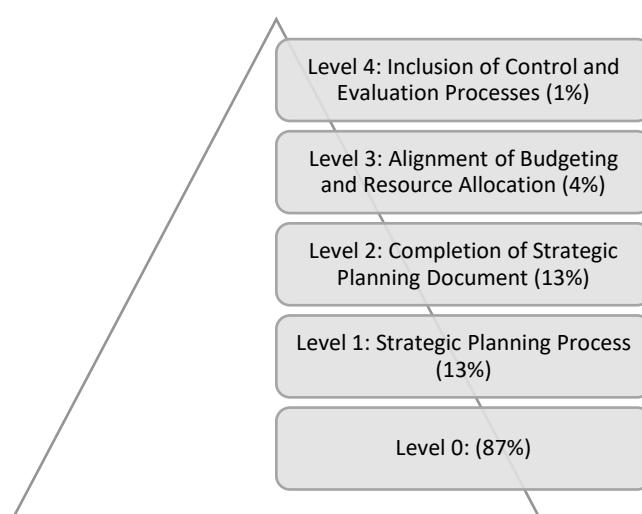
Figure 4. Percentage of First-Stage Municipalities Reporting Successive Levels of Strategic Management

Table 14 provides a breakdown of the eighteen municipalities achieving level one or higher by census subdivision type. There is a lower percentage of municipalities classified as Cities achieving levels one and higher than municipalities classified as Towns or Municipalities.

Census Subdivision Type	Count	Percentage Sample Subdivision Type
City (C, CV, CY)	4	9%
Municipality (M, MU)	3	15%
Town (T,TP)	11	14%
Total Municipalities achieving levels 1 and higher	18	

Table 14. Census Subdivision Type Breakdown for Municipalities Achieving Level One or Higher

Table 15 provides a breakdown of the municipalities achieving level one or higher by population distribution groups. All eighteen municipalities have populations under 50,000. Municipalities with populations under 15,000 represent the largest population group achieving level one or higher. This population grouping also included the five municipalities achieving level three.

Population Group	Count	Percentage Sample Population Group
Group 1: 10,000 to 15,000	10	23%
Group 2: 15,001 to 20,000	4	20%
Group 3: 20,001 to 25,000	2	11%
Group 4: 25,001 to 50,000	2	9%
Group 5: 50,001 to 100,000	0	0%
Group 6: 100,001 to 500,000	0	0%
Total Municipalities achieving levels 1 and higher	18	

Table 15. Population Group Breakdown for Municipalities Achieving Level One or Higher

The low percentage (13 percent) of the first-stage sample achieving level one could be a limitation of the data collection methodology. The absence of municipalities with populations over 50,000 achieving level one does not correspond to the high percentage of strategic plan adoption by municipalities with populations of 100,001 to 500,000 reported in Table 3.

Findings - First-Stage

The analysis of data for the first-stage sample found that 77 percent of all mid-sized Ontario municipalities have adopted strategic plans. The adoption of strategic plans is

operationally defined as the existence of a formal strategic planning document. Table 16 shows a

higher adoption percentage for the first-stage sample than for the two comparison studies.

	First-Stage Sample	Poister and Streib	Johnsen
Formal Strategic Plan initiated or completed	77%	44%	57%

Table 16. Adoption of Formal Strategic Plans

The three most common strategic planning activities of the first-stage sample are:

clarification of organizational mandates (80 percent), development of vision statement (79

percent) and identification of strategies (76 percent). Table 17 compares the percentages of the

three most common strategic planning activities for the first-stage sample with the results

reported by Poister and Streib. (The study conducted by Johnsen did not include survey

questions for strategic planning activities.) The first-stage sample reports a higher percentage of

the Ontario sample including clarification of organizational mandates, but lower percentages

with a vision statement and identification of strategies.

	First-Stage Sample	Poister and Streib
Clarification of Organizational Mandates	80%	53%
Review or development of Vision Statement	79%	89%
Identification of strategies	76%	92%

Table 17. Three Common Strategic Planning Activities

The analysis of the first-stage data suggests a low level of implementation success for

strategic management practices in mid-sized Ontario municipalities based on the strategic

management capacity framework developed by Vinzant and Vinzant in 1999 (shown in Figure 1

of this report). Analysis of the first-stage sample found 87 percent of the municipalities did not

achieve level one based on the absence of qualitative data showing that they had engaged in

strategic planning activities. However the lack of data may be a limitation of the data collection

method since it is possible that not all strategic planning activities were published on the

municipal websites or included in the formal strategic planning document. The high percentage

of municipalities with a formal, strategic plan suggests that a higher percentage of the first-stage sample may have achieved level two of the strategic management capacity framework which is defined as completion of a strategic planning document along with the implementation of a strategic planning process.

Table 18 provides a comparison of the first-stage Ontario sample with the results reported by Poister and Streib, as well as Johnsen for the successive levels of strategic management implementation. (There is no comparison data from the study conducted by Johnsen for level zero and level one.) The proportion of the first-stage sample at level zero is higher that results reported by Poister and Streib while the proportion for levels one, two, three, and four are lower. The first-stage estimates for levels two, three, and four are also lower than the results reported by Johnsen.

	First-Stage	Poister and Streib	Johnsen
Level 0 – No Strategic Management	87%	56%	
Level 1 - Strategic Planning Activities	13%	44%	
Level 2 - Strategic Planning Document	13%	37%	57%
Level 3 – Resource Allocation	4%	33%	40%
Level 4 – Control and Evaluation	1%	22%	22%

Table 18. Successive Levels of Strategic Management

Summary - First-Stage

The high percentage of the first-stage sample with formal strategic plans supports the hypothesis of a high adoption of strategic plans by mid-sized Ontario municipalities. The subdivision type breakdown identified that over 80 percent of the municipalities classified as Cities and Towns had formal strategic plans. The population breakdown identified the two population groups that had the highest percentage of municipalities with formal strategic plans were 25,001 to 50,000 and 100,001 to 500,000. The subdivision type and population size may influence the decision of municipal governments to develop strategic plans. Future research

would be required to determine the rationale along with any motivational factors that contributed to the higher adoption percentage for Ontario municipalities than the two comparison studies.

The low percentage of the first-stage sample that achieved level one of the strategic capacity framework could be a result of the lack of transparency with strategic planning processes. The absence of strategic planning information on municipal websites could be a result of limited administrative resources to publish strategic planning information on websites as well as lower citizen engagement in municipal government processes. Additional research is required to determine if the strategic planning activities occurred. The second-stage data collection will expand the document review to include municipal reports as a possible source of information regarding the strategic planning activities.

The low percentage of municipalities achieving level one of the strategic capacity framework supports the hypothesis that there will be a low percentage of mid-sized municipalities that are connecting strategic planning to strategic management processes. The expanded document review in the second-stage may find more information to support a higher alignment of strategic management processes.

Data Analysis – Second-Stage

The second-stage sample captured more detailed information from the public documents regarding the strategic planning elements and strategic management practices for each of the eighteen second-stage sample municipalities. The public document review included committee reports, council reports, annual reports and information from municipal websites. The research for the second-stage sample did not involve human subjects. The data collection for the second-stage sample was done using Microsoft Word. The analysis of the second-stage data collection

was done using Microsoft Excel to provide distribution statistics and comparisons to the research results reported by Poister and Streib in 2005 as well as Johnsen in 2016.

The sample cases for the second-stage analysis consist of the eighteen municipalities from the first-stage sample that achieved level one or higher on the strategic management capacity framework. The second-stage analysis was a multi-case cross-sectional snapshot of the eighteen mid-sized municipalities in Ontario at the time of the second-stage review, February 2020. The smaller size of the second-stage sample allowed for more data to be collected to assist with determining if mid-sized Ontario municipalities have been successful in implementing strategic management practices.

The first category of the second-stage evaluation criteria focused on the strategic planning activities and expanded on the criteria from the first-stage sample. Table 19 displays the results for the fifteen questions of the first category and confirms that the eighteen municipalities achieved level one. All eighteen municipalities completed a review of the mission and vision statements, engagement activities with stakeholders, identification of the needs and actions of stakeholders, clarification of organizational mandates, evaluation of internal strengths and weaknesses, evaluation of external threats and opportunities, identification of strategic issues and identification of strategies.

Seven out of the fifteen questions in the first category focused on the composition of the stakeholder participants in the strategic planning activities. The literature review highlighted that the stakeholder engagement was one of the key starting elements in strategic planning and strategic management activities (Bryson, 2011). The second-stage sample had 100 percent participation for three stakeholder groups: Mayor, Council, and City Manager/Chief Administrative Officer.

The second-stage sample reported over 90 percent inclusion of citizens, external stakeholders, and senior municipal staff in the stakeholder engagement activities. The lowest participation was reported for non-managerial staff. The lack of inclusion of non-managerial employees might contribute to the lower implementation success level for the second-stage sample. Vinzant & Vinzant (1996a) stated that "people are the key to implementing strategic management or any other organizational change effort" (p. 146).

Criteria for Level One: Strategic Planning Activities	Second-Stage Sample	
	Count	Percentage
Review/creation of organizational mission statement	18	100%
Identification of Stakeholders' needs and actions	18	100%
Stakeholder Engagement		
Mayor	18	100%
Council	18	100%
City Manager/Chief Administrative Officer	18	100%
Departmental Heads/Senior Staff	17	94%
Staff (non-managerial)	8	44%
Citizens and external stakeholders	17	94%
Community Groups	9	50%
Clarification of organizational mandates	18	100%
Evaluation of internal strengths and weaknesses	18	100%
Evaluation of external threats and opportunities	18	100%
Identification of strategic issues	18	100%
Identification of strategies (Goals and Objectives)	18	100%
Development of vision statement	18	100%

Table 19. Second-Stage Sample – First Category Criteria and Results

The second category of evaluation criteria focused on the components of the strategic planning document. Table 20 shows the results for the eight questions in the second category and confirms that all eighteen municipalities have achieved level two of the strategic management framework. Level two is the successful implementation of a strategic planning process as well as the completion of a strategic planning document (Vinzant & Vinzant, 1996a).

The second-stage collected additional information regarding the strategic planning documents for the eighteen sample municipalities. The additional information included the

implementation date and end date for the strategic plan. Table 20 highlights that 44 percent of the second-stage sample implemented their current strategic plan in 2019 and 2020. The data also reveals that 22 percent of the second-stage sample have expired strategic plans, 22 percent of the second-stage sample do not have an end date for their current strategic plan, and 56 percent of the second-stage sample have strategic plans that will be expiring in the next one to five years.

The second-stage analysis reports that Council owned the strategic plan in 33 percent of the municipalities. The next highest ownership group was the combination of Council and Administration with 28 percent of the sample municipalities. The third highest sample percentage group was the City Manager/Chief Administrative Officer.

The analysis revealed that 78 percent of municipalities in the second-stage sample leveraged a third-party consultant to assist with the planning and preparation of their current strategic plan. Further research may be required to determine if engaging a third-party resource impacts the adoption of strategic plans as well as the implementation success of the strategic management practices in mid-sized Ontario municipalities.

The three most common strategic plan components for the second-stage sample were goals and objectives, vision statement, and strategic agenda. There was 100 percent inclusion of goals and objectives for the eighteen sample municipalities. The least common component was the inclusion of a feasibility assessment. Carleton Place was the only municipality in the second-stage sample that included a feasibility assessment of the goals and objectives identified in the strategic plan. Carleton Place (2019) indicated that senior staff participated in a planning session where "they considered their departments' current workloads and other influencing factors. Staff

used the SMART model to determine if objectives and the Action Plan were: specific,

measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound" (p. 4).

Criteria for Level Two: Formal Strategic Planning Document	Second-Stage Sample	
	Count	Percentage
Implementation of Strategic Plan		
2012	3	17.0%
2013	1	5.5%
2015	3	17.0%
2016	1	5.5%
2017	1	5.5%
2018	1	5.5%
2019	6	33.0%
2020	2	11.0%
End Date for Strategic Plan		
No date specified	4	22.0%
2017	2	11.0%
2018	1	5.5%
2019	1	5.5%
2020	3	17.0%
2022	3	17.0%
2023	2	11.0%
2024	1	5.5%
2025	1	5.5%
Owner of Strategic Plan		
Council	6	33.0%
Chief Administrative Officer	3	17.0%
Mayor	1	5.5%
Mayor and Chief Administrative Officer	1	5.5%
Council and Administration	5	28.0%
Community Action Committee	1	5.5%
City Clerk	1	5.5%
External Consultant Involvement	14	78.0%
Strategic Plan Inclusion		
Vision Statement	17	94.0%
Goals and Objectives	18	100.0%
Strategic Agenda	14	78.0%
Action Plan	13	72.0%
Prioritization of Strategies	9	50.0%
Inclusion of feasibility assessment	1	5.5%

Table 20. Second-Stage Sample – Second Category Criteria and Results

The third evaluation category assessed the alignment of resource allocation to strategic management processes. The data collected from the third category will validate whether the municipality has achieved level three of the strategic management capacity framework. Level three is the successful completion of a strategic planning process, a strategic planning document, as well as budgeting and resource allocation changes (Vinzant & Vinzant, 1996a).

The evaluation criteria for the third category was comprised of five questions focusing on budget documents and employee performance management planning documents. There is a possibility that the budget and performance management information was not publicly accessible.

Table 21 provides the results for the third category and shows that only five out of the eighteen municipalities included references to strategic plan components in the annual budget documents. The low sample percentage of 28 percent may contribute to the lower implementation success for strategic management practices in mid-sized Ontario municipalities.

The inclusion of strategic planning components in Committee Reports was the third category criteria with the highest percentage of adoption for the second-stage sample. The analysis reported thirteen out of the eighteen municipalities have started to include references to the strategic plan components in Committee Reports. The high percentage may support adoption of strategic plans as well as build awareness of strategic management practices in local governments.

Criteria for Level Three: Resource Allocation	Second-Stage Sample	
	Count	Percentage
Annual Budget Documents reference Strategic Plan components	5	28.0%
Annual Budget Documents reflect the Strategic Plan priorities	0	0.0%
Committee Reports reference Strategic Plan components	13	72.0%
Performance Management planning documentation accessible	1	5.5%
Performance Management planning documentation reference Strategic Plan	0	0.0%

Table 21. Second-Stage Sample – Third Category Criteria and Results

The data collected for the third category validated that only four of the eighteen second-stage sample municipalities achieved level three of the strategic management capacity framework. Table 22 displays the breakdown of the four levels of the strategic management capacity framework for the second-stage sample. The four municipalities achieving level three are Cobourg, Middlesex Centre, Township of Hamilton, and Selwyn. All four municipalities included references to the strategic plan components in the annual budget document as well as Committee Reports.

	Count	Percentage	Municipalities
Level 1	18/18	100%	
Level 2	18/18	100%	
Level 3	4/18	22%	Township of Hamilton, Selwyn, Middlesex Centre, Cobourg
Level 4	0/18	0%	

Table 22. Second-Stage Sample – Successive Levels of Strategic Management

The fourth evaluation category examined the strategic planning documentation and municipal website information to determine if there was an inclusion of control and evaluation processes. The evaluation criteria consisted of six questions and determines if the municipality has achieved level four of the strategic management capacity framework. Level four of the strategic management capacity framework is the successful completion of a strategic planning process and a strategic planning document, as well as the inclusion of budgeting and resource allocation changes, and control and evaluation processes (Vinzant & Vinzant, 1996a).

Table 23 provides the results for the fourth category criteria and validates that none of the second-stage sample municipalities achieved level four. The data collection identified three municipalities or 17 percent of the sample included performance measures in the formal strategic planning document. The data analysis also identified that 17 percent of the sample municipalities reported performance measures for the strategic plan on their website.

Criteria for Level Four: Control and Evaluation	Second-Stage Sample	
	Count	Percentage
Inclusion of performance measures in Strategic Plan	3	17.0%
Identification of reporting requirements for performance measurement in the Strategic Plan	5	28.0%
Reporting frequency	9	50.0%
Reporting audience	7	39.0%
Tracking performance data over time	1	5.5%
Performance measurement tracking accessible to public	3	17.0%

Table 23. Second-Stage Sample – Level Four

The final category examined the inclusion of prioritization in strategic planning documents as well as in the implementation of the strategic management processes. There were two questions included in the fifth category of the evaluation criteria. Table 24 provides the criteria and results for the two questions.

The first question focuses on the inclusion of prioritization criteria for the strategies identified in the strategic plan. Vinzant & Vinzant (1996) identified "the single most important step in linking the strategic planning and resource allocation processes is the development of strategies with specified time frames for accomplishment at a program level" (p. 148). The identification of strategies with specific time frames supports the inclusion of prioritization criteria in the strategic plan.

The second-stage sample reports ten out of the eighteen municipalities included prioritization criteria for the strategies identified in the strategic plan. The data reports 56 percent or over half of the sample municipalities had included prioritization criteria for the proposed strategies. The second category of the evaluation criteria included one question regarding the inclusion of the prioritization of strategies in the strategic planning document. The analysis reports nine municipalities included prioritization of strategies in the formal strategic planning document as well as one municipality that included four key questions for Council to consider

when developing potential actions for any work programs. The Township of Wilmot (2013) indicated that the responses to the following four questions would assist senior staff when developing potential priority work program actions: "1. Does it move us towards our Vision? 2. Is it consistent with our Mission and Values? 3. Is it a stepping stone toward future improvements? 4. Is the action already underway or is it a new action that should be discussed?" (p. 15).

The analysis found only one municipality out of the eighteen sample municipalities included prioritization of strategies in the annual budget documents. The Township of Tiny included the Council-identified priority number on each line of the 2020 Capital Budget document (Township of Tiny, 2020).

Inclusion of Prioritization	Second-Stage Sample	
	Count	Percentage
Inclusion of prioritization criteria for proposed strategies in Strategic Plan	10	56.0%
Inclusion of strategic priorities in the annual budget document review	1	5.5%

Table 24. Second-Stage Sample – Prioritization Evaluation Criteria

Findings - Second-Stage

Table 25 compares the results for strategic planning activities of the second-stage sample with the results reported by Poister and Streib in 2005 and Johnsen in 2016. The second-stage sample reported 100 percent participation for three stakeholder participant groups: Mayor, Council, and City Manager/Chief Administrative Officer. The comparison studies reported the highest percentages for two out of the three groups. Poister and Streib reported 97 percent inclusion of City Manager/Chief Administrative Officer and 80 percent inclusion of Council members. Johnsen reported 91 percent inclusion of City Manager/Chief Administrative Officer and 79 percent inclusion of Council members.

The second-stage sample reported a higher percentage of citizen and external stakeholder engagement than results reported by Poister and Streib as well as Johnsen. The second-stage sample reported 94 percent of the municipalities conducted engagement with citizens and external stakeholders compared to 62 percent of the sample municipalities reported by Poister and Streib and 57 percent of the sample municipalities reported by Johnsen.

The second-stage sample reported only 44 percent of the sample municipalities included non-managerial staff in the strategic planning activities. The non-managerial group was also the lowest stakeholder participant group reported by Poister and Streib.

Criteria for Level One: Strategic Planning Activities	Second-Stage Sample	Poister and Streib	Johnsen
Review/creation of organizational mission statement	100%	79%	
Identification of Stakeholders' needs and actions	100%	72%	40%
Stakeholder Engagement			
Mayor	100%	78%	67%
Council	100%	80%	79%
City Manager/Chief Administrative Officer	100%	97%	91%
Departmental Heads/Senior Staff	94%	93%	90%
Staff (non-managerial)	44%	46%	68%
Citizens and external stakeholders	94%	62%	57%
Community Groups	50%		
Clarification of organizational mandates	100%	53%	
Evaluation of internal strengths and weaknesses	100%	60%	46%
Evaluation of external threats and opportunities	100%	57%	
Identification of strategic issues	100%		
Identification of strategies (Goals and Objectives)	100%	92%	93%
Development of vision statement	100%	89%	

Table 25. First Category Evaluation Criteria and Results

Table 26 compares the results for strategic plan components for the second-stage sample with the results reported by Poister and Streib in 2005 and Johnsen in 2016. The inclusion of goals and objective was the most common component among all three studies.

Criteria for Level Two: Strategic Planning Document Components	Second-Stage Sample	Poister and Streib	Johnsen
Vision Statement	94.0%	89%	
Goals and Objectives	100.0%	92%	93%
Strategic Agenda	78.0%	71%	
Action Plan	72.0%	78%	89%
Prioritization of Strategies	50.0%		
Inclusion of feasibility assessment	5.5%	36%	46%

Table 26. First Category Evaluation Criteria and Results

Level three results from the second-stage sample could not be compared to the results from Poister and Streib or the results from Johnsen as both comparator studies leveraged survey questions to measure perception of the resource allocation components of the strategic management implementation. The second-stage data collection was based on the facts available in public documents.

Table 27 compares the result of the one common element for level four for the three studies. The second-stage sample percentage for the accessibility of performance measurement to the public is similar to the results reported by Johnsen and lower than the percentage reported by Poister and Streib.

Criteria for Level Four: Control and Evaluation	Second-Stage Sample	Poister and Streib	Johnsen
Performance measurement tracking accessible to public	17%	35%	18%

Table 27. Fourth Category Evaluation Criteria and Results

Summary - Second-Stage

The second-stage analysis of the data on mid-sized Ontario municipalities focused on the eighteen municipalities that have implemented a strategic planning process and have completed a formal strategic plan. These characteristics position the eighteen municipalities at levels one and two of the strategic management capacity framework developed by Vinzant and Vinzant in 1999.

Table 28 compares the success levels of the strategic management implementation scale for the second-stage sample against the implementation success levels reported by Poister and

Streib in 2005 as well as Johnsen in 2016. There is no level one comparison for the study conducted by Johnsen as the survey did not include questions on strategic planning activities. The second-stage sample shows a higher percentage of level one success than Poister and Streib who reported a 44 percent achievement of level one. The second-stage sample reports a higher percentage of level two success than the studies conducted by Poister and Streib as well as Johnsen. While one hundred percent of the second-stage sample are at level two, Poister and Streib reported 37 percent of their American sample and Johnsen reported a 57 percent achievement of level two in their Norwegian sample.

The analysis of the second-stage data also highlights a lower success rate in the implementation of strategic management practices. Table 28 shows that only 22 percent of the second-stage sample achieved level three of the strategic management capacity framework and that none achieved level four. Moreover, the second-stage sample percentages for levels three and four are lower than the percentages reported by Poister and Streib as well as Johnsen.

	Second-Stage Sample	Poister and Streib	Johnsen
Level 1 - Strategic Planning Activities	100%	44%	
Level 2 - Strategic Planning Document	100%	37%	57%
Level 3 – Resource Allocation	22%	33%	40%
Level 4 - Control and Evaluation	0%	22%	22%

Table 28. Successive Levels of Strategic Management

The analysis of the qualitative data collected for the mid-sized Ontario municipalities along with the strategic planning and management literature identified five factors that may contribute to higher levels of strategic planning adoption as well as higher success levels for the implementation of strategic management practices. The factors are stakeholder involvement, strategic plan components, prioritization of strategies, alignment of resource allocation, and evaluation processes.

Stakeholder Involvement

The selection and involvement of the stakeholders may contribute to higher adoption of strategic plans as well as higher implementation success for strategic management practices. Bryson (2011) stated "that if an organization has time to do only one thing when it comes to strategic planning, that one thing ought to be a stakeholder analysis" (p. 132). The City of Orillia (2019), one municipality in the second-stage sample, expressed that "understanding the importance of buy-in and commitment, this Strategic Plan was developed through a collaborative process based on thoughtful input and open discussions conducted through a series of engagement activities" (p. 11).

Table 29 reports the participation percentages of the stakeholder groups for all three studies. There is some commonality among the top participation groups of Council, Chief Administrative Officer, and senior management. The literature review also supports the inclusion of the top three participation groups. Bryson (2011) stated "the support and commitment of key decision makers are vital if strategic planning in an organization is to succeed" (p. 47).

Bryson (2011) indicates that "two leadership roles are especially important to the success of any strategic planning effort: sponsoring and championing" (p. 394). Council along with the Mayor would be classified as the sponsors of the strategic plan. The Chief Administrative Officer and senior management would be classified as the champions of the strategic plan. All three studies report high participation percentages for both sponsoring and championing roles.

The second-stage analysis reports 100 percent participation by the Mayor and Council stakeholder groups. Poister and Streib reported 78 percent participation by the Mayor and 80 percent participation by Council. Johnsen reported 67 percent participation by the Mayor and 79 percent participation by Council.

Vinzant & Vinzant (1996a) stated that "no matter which approach to strategic management is selected for implementation, the senior management team will play an indispensable leadership role" (p. 151). All three studies report over 90 percent of the sample municipalities included senior management resources in the strategic planning activities. Johnsen reported that senior management was the most central stakeholder for strategic planning in Norwegian municipalities (Johnsen, 2016). The second-stage analysis reports that three out of the four municipalities achieving level three of the strategic management capacity framework included senior managers in the stakeholder engagement activities. Elbanna et al. (2015) identified that one outcome of the involvement of senior managers in strategic planning activities "is the enhancement of managers' commitment to and alignment with public policy and organizational priorities, in addition to helping managers in acquiring the knowledge necessary for strategy implementation, which in turn increases the possibility of its success" (p. 1036).

Poister and Streib identified the inclusion of citizens and external stakeholders as one factor impacting the public perception of the success of the strategic planning process (Poister & Streib, 2005). The analysis of the second-stage sample found that 94 percent of the municipalities included citizens and external stakeholders in their strategic planning activities and all four municipalities achieving level three of the strategic management capacity framework included citizens and external stakeholders. The two comparison studies reported less than 63 percent of the municipalities included citizens and external stakeholders in their strategic planning activities.

The study by Poister and Streib as well as the second-stage sample identified non-managerial staff as the lowest stakeholder participation group. The second-stage analysis reports that only two of the four municipalities achieving level three of the strategic management

capacity framework included non-managerial staff in the stakeholder engagement activities. The

inclusion of non-managerial staff in strategic planning processes may be a possible area for

improvement as well as a contributor to higher adoption of strategic management practices in

mid-sized municipalities. Employees may feel a stronger connection to the organization's

strategic goals when they are invited to participate in the strategic planning activities. The

increased awareness of the strategies and goals may provide non-managerial staff with a clearer

sense of direction and increase productivity as employees are able to see how their efforts

contribute to the organization's goals and successes. Blackman et al. (2013) indicate "employee

motivation is likely to be enhanced where employees can clearly see how their work contributes

to broader organizational and government goals: it demonstrates how they are making a

difference" (p. 15). The inclusion of all levels of employees in strategic planning activities may

increase staff engagement and help build a supportive workplace culture.

	Second-Stage Sample	Poister and Streib	Johnsen
Mayor	100%	78%	67%
Council	100%	80%	79%
Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)	100%	97%	91%
Senior Management	94%	93%	90%
Citizens and External Stakeholders	94%	62%	57%
Staff (non-managerial)	44%	46%	68%

Table 29. Stakeholder Group Participation

The second-stage sample reports 78 percent of the municipalities used a third party

consultant to assist with strategic planning activities and preparation of the strategic planning

document. All four municipalities achieving level three of the strategic management capacity

framework have engaged an external consultant to assist with the current or upcoming strategic

plans. Vinzant & Vinzant (1996a) suggested "devoting attention to the purpose of the strategic

management process prior to implementation can prevent costly misunderstandings and

disruptions" (p. 150). The external consultant may assist with the awareness and understanding

of the strategic management processes for stakeholders with limited or no knowledge of strategic planning.

One of the second-stage municipalities, Middlesex Centre, published several documents on their website to provide education and awareness of the upcoming strategic planning activities. One document, Meet Our Consultants, identified the following rationale for the use of third-party consultant to assist with the development of the new strategic plan: lack of staff resource time, an objective and non-biased perspective, experience in the municipal sector, and expertise with strategic planning processes (Middlesex Centre, 2020a). The use of an external consultant to facilitate the strategic plan preparation may contribute to higher stakeholder participation percentages and may also contribute to higher acceptance of the strategic plan by the stakeholders. A suggestion for future research would be to include a survey of stakeholders to gauge their perceptions of the contributions of the external consultant to the strategic planning activities.

Strategic Plan Components

Strategic planning according to the Township of Tay (2019) "is one of the most important tools that a municipality can use to bring together residents, members of Council, and municipal staff in the development of a common vision, direction, and goals for the community" (p 3). All three studies reported high percentages for the inclusion of vision, goals, and objectives in the formal strategic planning documents.

Table 30 highlights the three most common strategic plan components. The inclusion of goals and objectives was the most common component for all three studies. The second-stage Ontario sample found all municipalities identified goals and objectives in their strategic plans. The American study reported 92 percent of the municipalities included goals and objectives as

did 93 percent of the Norwegian survey respondents. The inclusion of goals and objectives in the strategic plan supports the vision for the municipality as well as provides a roadmap to guide the actions of Council and staff.

The second common component was the development and inclusion of a vision statement for the future. The second-stage Ontario sample found that 94 percent of the municipalities included a vision statement in the strategic planning document. All four municipalities achieving level three of the strategic management capacity framework included a vision statement as did 89 percent of the American municipalities studied by Poister and Streib. Johnsen reported 84 percent of the Norwegian municipalities included the review and development of mission, vision, and values in the strategic planning activities. Bryson (2011) indicates that the "vision of success is more important as a guide to implementing strategy than it is to formulating it" (p. 271).

The third common component was the inclusion of action plans for implementing the strategic plan. Poister and Streib identified the development of action plans as one of the elements that could significantly impact the perceived success of the strategic planning activities (Poister & Streib, 2005). The action plans initiate the implementation of the strategic management practices as well as provide an opportunity to incorporate priorities and timelines. The second-stage sample reports a lower percentage for the inclusion of action plans compared to the results reported by Johnsen as well as Poister and Streib (Table 30). The second-stage analysis also reports that three of the four municipalities achieving level three of the strategic management capacity framework included action plans in the strategic planning document.

The three most common strategic components listed in Table 30 enable the mission driven strategic processes by focusing on the future, setting goals, and initiating plans for implementation. (Poister & Streib, 2005).

	Second-Stage Sample	Poister and Streib	Johnsen
Inclusion of Goals and Objectives	100%	92%	93%
Inclusion of Vision for the Future	94%	89%	84%
Inclusion of Action Plans	72%	78%	89%

Table 30. Strategic Plan Components

Prioritization of Strategies

Middlesex Centre (2020b) expressed "unless priorities are consciously established and communicated, everyone gets disappointed and disillusioned" (p. 2). Table 31 shows that 56 percent of the sample municipalities included prioritization of strategies in the strategic planning processes. The analysis also found that three of the four municipalities achieving level three of the strategic management capacity framework included prioritization criteria for the proposed strategies in the strategic planning document. Only one of the second-stage sample included prioritization in the strategic management processes. The inclusion of prioritization for strategies in strategic planning and management processes may contribute to the effective use of strategic plans in mid-sized Ontario municipalities.

The low percentage of prioritization inclusion in strategic management processes such as budgeting may lead to misalignment between strategy expectations and outcomes. The Township of Georgian Bluffs (2019) expressed that "No municipality can be all things to all people. Priorities must be set that are realistic and in areas where accomplishments are achievable and measureable" (p. 16). However the stakeholder group including Council, senior staff, and members of public determined ranking of the five strategic areas of focus was not possible due to the interdependency of the focus areas. Georgian Bluffs' experience may provide some insight in the low use of prioritization in strategic planning. The determination of priorities for competing strategies may have political impacts and politicians may be reluctant to support strategies that do not have public support but are critical to municipality's service delivery.

Another possible source of resistance to include prioritization is the shared ownership of the strategic plan between Council and Administration. George (2017) reported the Flemish politicians felt with the adoption of strategic plans "the decision-making 'power' in the municipality has shifted from them to the administration" (p. 528). A suggestion for future research would be to include a survey of Council members to gauge their perceptions regarding the inclusion of prioritization in strategic management processes.

	Second-Stage Sample
Inclusion of prioritization criteria for proposed strategies in Strategic Plan	56.0%
Inclusion of strategic priorities in the annual budget document review	5.5%

Table 31. Inclusion of Prioritization

Alignment of Resource Allocation

All three studies collected data to determine the alignment of resource allocation decisions to the strategic plan. Poister and Streib as well as Johnsen used survey questions to measure the perception of the alignment of budgeting and resourcing actions with the strategic plans. The second-stage analysis used facts from public documents to assess the alignment of budget and resource allocation decisions to the strategic plans.

Poister & Streib (2005) reported "more than 80 percent indicated that the annual budget prepared by their chief administrators strongly supported their strategic goals and objectives" (p. 49). Johnsen reported 71 percent of the municipalities that initiated or completed a strategic plan indicated that the annual budget reflected the objectives and priorities of the strategic plan. The second-stage sample reports 28 percent of the municipalities referenced the strategic plan in the annual budget documents. All four municipalities achieving level three of the strategic management capacity framework referenced strategic planning components in the annual budget documents. The inclusion of strategic plan references in annual budget documents might be an

area of focus for local governments wanting to improve the success level of strategic management implementation.

Johnsen (2016) found that 47 percent of Norwegian municipalities reported "the strategic plan had a strong influence on the budget requests submitted by department heads and other managers" (p. 351). Poister & Streib also reported that the strategic plan had a strong influence on budget requests. The second-stage Ontario sample found that 72 percent of the municipalities referenced the strategic plan in Committee Reports. All four municipalities achieving level three of the strategic management capacity framework referenced strategic planning components in reports to Committee and Council. The high percentage of strategic plan references in Committee Reports may suggest that strategic plans are used in decision making and support strategic management practices in local governments.

Poister and Streib identified the alignment of individual departmental objectives to strategic plan objectives as one element that will drive success for strategic management implementation. Johnsen (2016) reported "in 70 percent of the municipalities, objectives established for department heads and other managers come from the overall strategic plan" (p. 352). Poister and Streib reported 83 percent of the municipalities aligned objectives for departmental management with the organization's strategic plan. The second-stage data collection did not include data to measure the alignment of departmental plans to the strategic plans. A suggestion for future research would be the analysis of departmental plans and objectives to determine if there is a direct cascade from the strategic plan objectives.

The second element that Poister and Streib identified as a driver for successful strategic management was basing annual evaluations of staff performance on their contributions in accomplishing strategic goals and objectives. Poister and Streib reported 64 percent of the

municipalities based annual management evaluations on accomplishment of strategic plan objectives and goals. Johnsen reported that 47 percent of the municipalities aligned annual management performance evaluations with the accomplishments of strategic goals and objectives. The second-stage analysis reports that none of the municipalities referenced performance management alignment in the strategic planning document.

Ammons & Roenigk (2015) found that local governments aligning performance management practices to strategic goals "reported greater achievement of the benefits they anticipated from performance management" (p. 534). Possible suggestions for future research is the analysis of performance management plans and alignment of the plans with strategic planning activities. Blackman et al. (2013) indicated that the "alignment between organisational strategy, group and individual goals is necessary to ensure that individuals can see how their individual effort and performance contribute to the attainment of organisational and governmental goals" (p. 15).

Evaluation Processes

Poister & Streib (2005) concluded that "linking performance measures to strategic plans appears to be far less common than linking budgets or performance management systems to strategic plans" (p. 54). Table 32 displays the low percentage of municipalities providing strategic plan performance measurements to the public on a regular basis for all three studies. The second-stage sample reports 17 percent of the municipalities published performance measures for the strategic plans on their websites. The second-stage analysis also found that only one of the four municipalities achieving level three of the strategic management capacity framework provided performance measurement tracking of the strategic plan on the municipal website.

Poister and Streib reported that 35 percent of the American municipalities provide performance measures associated with the strategic plan to the public on a regular basis while Johnsen reported that this was true for 18 percent of the Norwegian municipalities. Performance management according to Ammons et al. (2013) "is about using performance information to improve operations and services and to gain other important benefits" (p. 176).

The Township of Tay (2019) highlighted that the strategic plan "functions as an accountability tool, allowing management and the public to evaluate progress and ensure that the municipality is moving in the direction set by stakeholders and decision-makers" (p. 3). The inclusion of evaluation processes will help measure the success of the strategic plan objectives as well as validate that the efforts of Council and Administration align with the direction and goals of the strategic plan.

	Second-Stage Sample	Poister and Streib	Johnsen
Performance measurement tracking accessible to public	17%	35%	18%

Table 32. Performance Measurement Tracking

The Township of Hamilton (2020) expressed the following observation regarding tracking strategic management evaluation in their 2020 Capital Budget Plan:

We initially explored a strategic planning management program. The program provides comprehensive tracking and rollup for performance plans, business plans and strategic plan goals. The program is ideal for a larger community and we will be examining alternatives more targeted to smaller municipalities needs and priorities and we will be able to implement a program for less funds (p. 37).

This observation from the Township of Hamilton highlights the possibility that local governments may underestimate the effort required to track and report performance measures when developing strategic plans. Analysis of the data collection notes found that six

municipalities in the second-stage sample provided recommendations and guidelines for performance measurement tracking in the formal strategic plans however none of six municipalities had published the recommended measurements. Future research could focus on expectations and perceptions of stakeholders regarding evaluation processes for the strategic plan.

The second-stage analysis along with the results reported by Poister and Streib and Johnsen highlight the strong adoption of strategic plans by local governments. All three studies reported high levels of stakeholder participation as well as the inclusion of goals and objectives, vision statement, and action plans in the strategic planning processes. The analysis also highlighted a lower level of implementation success for strategic management practices in local governments. The literature review along with results from the three studies identified that the inclusion of prioritization, alignment of resource allocation decisions, and evaluation of performance measures may contribute to higher success levels of strategic management implementations.

Conclusion

Poister & Streib (2005) identified that "strategic planning is an action-oriented type of planning that is useful only if it is carefully linked to implementation – and this is often where the process breaks down" (p. 46).

The research found that there is a high percentage of mid-sized Ontario local governments adopting strategic plans. The research also found that there is a low percentage of mid-sized Ontario municipalities linking strategic plans to strategic management practices such as budgeting, performance management, and measurement. The research results highlighted the low level of implementation success for strategic management in local governments. Analysis of

the second-stage sample reported that only four of the eighteen municipalities achieved level three of the strategic management capacity framework. Level three is the successful achievement of a strategic planning process and the completion of a strategic planning document as well as the alignment of resource allocation to strategic plans.

Plant (2016) stated that "municipalities are often good at developing a strategic plan comprised of a vision, goals and initiatives, however there is often little thought given to how the plan will be integrated into the organizational decision making process" (p. 2). The research results suggest that local governments have not embraced strategic planning and management as a set of managerial practices that have the ability to enhance decision making, clarify organizational goals, as well as improve efficiency and effectiveness of municipal service delivery. The integration of strategic planning into organizational management processes may increase the awareness and understanding of the strategic plan and allow the strategic plan to permeate into the culture of the organization. Future research could investigate why are municipalities developing formal strategic plans but not leveraging the benefits of implementing strategic management practices.

There is a possibility that the sample municipalities in this research did not publish strategic planning and management activities on their websites. This is a limitation of the data collection method used for this research report. Future research could focus on surveys to collect data on strategic planning, budgeting, performance management, and municipal measurement processes. The use of surveys could also assist with gauging the perceptions of stakeholders regarding the strategic planning and management processes as well as measuring the impacts of the implementation of strategic management practices in local governments.

References

Ammons, D. N. 2010. Determining the purpose of the performance measurement system: An important first step. *Government Finance Review* 26, (5) (10): 63-65.

Ammons, D. N., Liston, E. G., & Jones, J. A. (2013). Performance Management Purpose, Executive Engagement, and Reported Benefits among Leading Local Governments. *State and Local Government Review*, 45(3), 172–179.

Ammons, D. N. & Roenigk, D. J. (2015) Performance Management in Local Government: Is Practice Influenced by Doctrine?, *Public Performance & Management Review*, 38(3), 514-541.

Battaglia, M. (2008a). Convenience sampling. In P. J. Lavrakas (Ed.), Encyclopedia of survey research methods (pp. 149-149). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. doi: 10.4135/9781412963947.n105

Battaglia, M. (2008b). Multi-stage sample. In P. J. Lavrakas (Ed.), Encyclopedia of survey research methods (pp. 493-493). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. doi: 10.4135/9781412963947.n311

Battaglia, M. (2008c). Purposive sample. In P. J. Lavrakas (Ed.), Encyclopedia of survey research methods (pp. 645-647). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. doi: 10.4135/9781412963947.n419

Beckett-Camarata, J. (2003). An Examination of the Relationship between the Municipal Strategic Plan and the Capital Budget and its Effect on Financial Performance. *Journal of Public Budgeting, Accounting & Financial Management*, 15(1), 23–40.

Blackman, D., Buick, F., O'Donnell, M., O'Flynn, J., West, D. (2013). Strengthening The Performance Framework: Towards a High Performing Australian Public Service. Retrieved from: https://www.apsc.gov.au/sites/default/files/Performance_accessible.pdf

Bryson, J. M. (2010). The Future of Public and Nonprofit Strategic Planning in the United States. *Public Administration Review*, *70*(1), s255–s267.

Bryson, J. M. (2011). Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations: A Guide to Strengthening and Sustaining Organizational Achievement (4th ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Bryson, J. M., Crosby, B. C., & Bryson, J. K. (2009) Understanding Strategic Planning and the Formulation and Implementation of Strategic Plans as a Way of Knowing: The Contributions of Actor-Network Theory. *International Public Management Journal*, 12(2), 172-207.

Carleton Place. (2019). Balancing Growth 2019 – 2023 Corporate Strategic Plan. Retrieved
    from:
    https://carletonplace.ca/photos/custom/Carleton%20Place%20Strategic%20Plan%20Final
    %20Report_.pdf

Centre for Sustainability Whistler. (2019). Strategic Planning – Government. Retrieved from:
    http://www.whistlercentre.ca/community-planning/strategic-planning/

City of London. Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee. (2019). Council's Strategic Plan
    2019-2023: Draft Outcomes, Expected Results, Strategies, Metrics, Targets and
    Preliminary Cost Estimates. Retrieved from https://pub-
    london.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=60553

City of Orillia. (2019). Realizing Our Potential City of Orillia – Municipal Strategic Plan.
    Retrieved from: https://www.orillia.ca/en/city-hall/resources/CCTD/City-of-Orillia-
    Strategic-Plan-Final.pdf

Elbanna, S., Andrews, R., & Pollanen, R. (2016). Strategic Planning and Implementation
    Success in Public Service Organizations: Evidence from Canada. *Public Management
    Review*, 18(7), 1017-1042.

George, B. (2017). Does strategic planning 'work' in public organizations? Insights from Flemish
    municipalities. *Public Money & Management*, 37(7), 527-530.

Johnsen, Å. (2016). Strategic Planning and Management in Local Government in Norway: Status
    after Three Decades. *Scandinavian Political Studies*, 39(4), 333-365.

Middlesex Centre. (2020a). Strategic Plan 2020-2025 Meet Our Consultants. Retrieved from:
    https://middlesexcentre.on.ca/sites/default/files/2020-
    01/Strategic_Plan_Meet_our_Consultants.pdf

Middlesex Centre. (2020b). Strategic Plan 2020-2025 Why is the municipality preparing a 5-year
    strategic plan?. Retrieved from: https://middlesexcentre.on.ca/sites/default/files/2020-
    01/Strategic_Plan_Why_Plan.pdf

Mitchell, D., Larson, S. E., Colantonio, C., & Nguyen, C. (2018). Planning for Change:
    Incorporating Contextual Implementation Design into Strategic Planning. *State and Local
    Government Review*, 50(2), 110-118.

Noto, G., & Noto, L. (2018). Local Strategic Planning and Stakeholder Analysis: Suggesting a
    Dynamic Performance Management Approach. *Public Organization Review*, 19(3), 293-
    310.

Plant, T. (2016). Continuously Improving Municipalities to Achieve Strategic Success. Retrieved
    from: https://www.amcto.com/getattachment/1348b3f7-86c2-4b80-9706-
    437d3c6dd89c/.aspx

Poister, T. H. (2010). The Future of Strategic Planning in the Public Sector: Linking Strategic Management and Performance. *Public Administration Review*, 70(1), s246–s254.

Poister, T. H., Pitts, D. W., & Hamilton Edwards, L. (2010). Strategic Management Research in the Public Sector: A Review, Synthesis, and Future Directions. *American Review of Public Administration*, 40(5), 522-545.

Poister, T. H., & Streib, G. (2005). Elements of Strategic Planning and Management in Municipal Government: Status after two decades. *Public Administration Review*, 65(1), 45-56.

Statistics Canada. (2019). Population and Dwelling Count Highlight Tables, 2016 Census. Retrieved from: https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/hlt-fst/pd-pl/Table.cfm?Lang=Eng&T=302&SR=1&S=86&O=A&RPP=9999

Township of Georgian Bluffs. (2019). Strategic Plan 2020-2024. Retrieved from: https://www.georgianbluffs.ca/en/business-development/resources/2019-135---Strategic-Plan-2020-2024.pdf

Township of Hamilton. (2020). 2020 Draft Capital Budget. Retrieved from: https://www.hamiltontownship.ca/en/township-office/resources/2020-Budget-Docs/2020-Capital-Budget.pdf

Township of Tay. (2019). Corporate Strategic Plan Report 2019-2022. Retrieved from: https://www.tay.ca/en/your-municipality/resources/Documents/2019-2022_strategic-plan_draft.pdf

Township of Tiny. (2020). 2020 Budget. Retrieved from: https://www.tiny.ca/Shared%20Documents/Treasury/2020%20Budget%20Book%20-%20for%20website.pdf

Township of Wilmot. (2013). Strategic Plan Council Approved. Retrieved from: https://www.wilmot.ca/en/living-here/resources/Documents/Township-of-Wilmot---Strategic-Plan.pdf

Vinzant, D. H., & Vinzant, J. C. (1996a). Strategy and Organizational Capacity: Finding a Fit. *Public Productivity & Management Review*, 20(2), 139-157.

Vinzant, J. C., & Vinzant, D. H. (1996b). Strategic Management and Total Quality Management: Challenges and Choices. *Public Administration Quarterly*, 20(2), 201-219.

Appendix A: Evaluation Criteria for First-Stage, Research Design

Strategic Management Capacity Framework Level	Criteria	Exists? Y/N
Level One - Successful implementation of a Strategic Planning Process	Organizational Mission Statement	
	Vision Statement	
	Clarification of Organizational Mandates	
	Stakeholder Analysis (Identification of stakeholders' needs and concerns)	
	SWOT (Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats) Evaluation of internal strengths and weakness as well as external opportunities and threats	
	Identification of strategic issues	
	Development of strategies	
Level Two – Completion of Strategic Planning Document	Formal Strategic Plan Document?	
Level Three – Resource Allocation	High level review of website for data sources for second-stage analysis: - Budget documents available on website? - Strategic Plan includes strategies for human, financial, physical and technological resources? Search criteria included 'resource allocation', 'strategies', 'budget'	
Level Four – Control and Evaluation	High level review or website for data sources for second-stage analysis: Performance measurements associated with Strategic Plan accessible on website?	

Appendix B: Data Collection Spreadsheet for First-Stage, Research Design

Statistics Canada Data			Level One - Strategic Planning Process							Level Two - Strategic Planning Document	Level Three - Resource Allocation		Level Four - Control and Evaluation
Municipality	Type	Population 2016	Mission	Vision	Mandates	Stakeholder Analysis	S W O T	Identify Issues	Identify Strategies	Formal Strategic Document Y/N?	Budget docs accessible on website?	Strategic Plan includes resource strategies?	Strategic Plan performance measurements accessible on website?

Appendix C: Evaluation Criteria for Second-Stage, Research Design: Strategic

Management – Alignment to Resource Management, Control and Evaluation Processes

Criteria	Values	Supporting documentation, website address (url)	Notes
Strategic Planning Activities (Level One of the Strategic Management Capacity Framework) (Y/N)			
Review of organizational mission			
Identification of stakeholders' needs and concerns			
Stakeholder Engagement in Strategic Planning Activities – Identify participants (Y/N)			
Mayor			
Council Members			
City Manager/CFO			
Departmental Managers			
Staff (non-managerial)			
Citizens			
Community Groups			
Clarification of organizational mandates			
Evaluation of internal strengths and weaknesses			
Evaluation of external threats and opportunities			
Identification of strategic issues			
Development of strategies			
Development of vision statement			
Completion of Strategic Planning Document (Level Two of the Strategic Management Capacity Framework)			
Implementation date for Current Strategic Plan			
Ending date for Current Strategic Plan			
Owner of Strategic Plan: *Mayor* *Council*			

City Manager/Chief Administrative Officer *Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer* *City Clerk* *Other (specific position)*			
Current Strategic Plan includes: *(Y/N)*			
Vision			
Goals and Objectives			
Strategic Agenda			
Action Plan			
Prioritization of strategies			
Did the Strategic Planning process include a feasibility assessment of proposed strategies? *(Y/N)*			
Resource Allocation Alignment (Level Three of the Strategic Management Capacity Framework) *(Y/N)*			
Annual budget documents reference Strategic Plan components (goals/objectives/action plans)			
Annual budget documents reflect the priorities established in the Strategic Plan			
Budget requests including committee reports, business cases, and departmental reports reference Strategic Plan components (goals/objectives/action plans)			
Performance management planning documentation accessible on municipal website?			
If Performance management documentation is accessible, is there a reference to the Strategic Plan components (goals/objectives/action plans)			
Control and Evaluation Inclusion (Level Four of the Strategic Management Capacity Framework) *(Y/N)*			
Does the strategic planning documentation include performance measures to track action plans identified in the			

Strategic Plan (projects, initiatives, etc.)?			
Does the strategic planning documentation specify reporting requirements for tracking performance measures associated with the Strategic Plan?			
Strategic planning requirements include reporting frequency?			
Strategic planning requirements include reporting audience (Staff, Council, Community, and Public)?			
Strategic planning requirements include tracking performance data over time to determine whether performance in strategic results areas has improved over previous levels.			
Performance measurement tracking reports accessible on municipal website?			
Inclusion of Prioritization *(Y/N)*			
Did the strategic planning document include prioritization criteria for proposed strategies?			
Was there any reference to strategic priorities in the annual budget document review?			

Appendix D: Data Collection Spreadsheet for Second-Stage, Research Design

	Municipality 1	Municipality 2	Municipality 3	Municipality ...
Strategic Planning Activities (Level One of the Strategic Management Capacity Framework)				
Review of organizational mission				
Identification of stakeholders' needs and concerns				
Stakeholder Engagement in Strategic Planning Activities - Identify participants				
Mayor				
Council Members				
City Manager/Chief Administrative Officer				
Departmental Managers				
Staff (non-managerial)				
Citizens				
Community Groups				
Clarification of organizational mandates				
Evaluation of internal strengths and weaknesses				
Evaluation of external threats and opportunities				
Identification of strategic issues				
Development of strategies				
Development of vision statement				
Strategic Planning Document (Level Two of the Strategic Management Capacity Framework)				
Implementation date for current Strategic Plan				
Ending date for current Strategic Plan				

Owner of Strategic Plan				
Mayor; Council; City Manager/Chief Administrative Officer; Chief Financial Officer/City Treasurer; City Clerk; other (specific position)				
Current Strategic Plan includes:				
Vision				
Goals and objectives				
Strategic Agenda				
Action Plan				
Prioritization of strategies				
Inclusion of feasibility assessment of proposed strategies in the Strategic Planning processes?				
Strategic Management Practices: resource allocation (Level Three of the Strategic Management Capacity Framework)				
Annual Budget documents reference Strategic Plan components (goals/objectives/action plans)				
Annual budget documents reflect the priorities established in the Strategic Plan				
Budget requests (committee reports, business cases, department reports) reference Strategic Plan components (goals/objectives/action plans)				
Performance Management Planning documentation accessible on municipal website				
If Y, is there a reference to Strategic Plan components (goals/objectives/action plans)?				

Strategic Management Practices: control and evaluation **(Level Four of the Strategic Management Capacity Framework)**				
Does the strategic planning documentation include performance measures to track action plans identified in the Strategic Plan (projects, initiatives, etc.)?				
Does the strategic planning documentation specify reporting requirements for tracking performance measures associated with the Strategic Plan?				
Strategic planning requirements include reporting frequency?				
Strategic planning requirements include reporting audience?				
Strategic planning requirements include tracking performance data over time to determine whether performance in strategic results areas has improved over previous levels?				
Performance measurement tracking reports are accessible on municipal website?				
Inclusion of Prioritization *(Y/N)*				
Did the strategic planning document include prioritization criteria for proposed strategies?				
Was there any reference to strategic priorities in the annual budget document review?				