

**Exploring, Understanding, and Determining the
Quality of Plan Monitoring and Evaluation in Ontario**

by

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

Planning takes place in the context of diverse stakeholder interests and complex decision-making processes. Planning activities are often complicated by a range of factors: increasing pressure on municipalities with ageing populations and infrastructure; the downward transfer of responsibilities from higher levels of government to lower ones; budget and resource constraints; increasing pressure on the provision of infrastructure services; political change; climate change and environmental issues; urban sprawl and gentrification; and limited availability of skilled labor. These factors have intensified the challenge of making sound and optimal decisions that consider the interests of diverse stakeholders.

To improve decision-making, planners invest significant resources in the creation of plans and policies. It thus becomes important to consider whether planning decisions and interventions align with the visions, goals, objectives, and targets crafted within these plans. Plan monitoring and evaluation helps to track the performance of planning actions and considers the alignment of these actions with pre-defined goals, objectives, and targets. A significant amount of research has investigated the efficacy of plan monitoring and evaluation; this research has determined that monitoring and evaluation remains an undervalued or forgotten step of the planning process.

A mixed-methods research approach was adopted to explore the efficacy and quality of various plans and reports in terms of plan monitoring and evaluation. A combination of qualitative review and content analysis exercises determined that the overall quality of the plans and reports with regard to monitoring and evaluation is quite far from the ideal plan monitoring and evaluation practice defined by the literature. A set of parameters deemed important for high-quality plans and reports was identified as part of the literature review. Using these parameters, the plans and reports were analyzed (quantitatively).

It was observed that all the municipalities being investigated do engage in monitoring and evaluation, but to different degrees with some municipalities demonstrating closer alignment with the principles of ideal monitoring and evaluation practice than others. Almost all the

municipalities investigated consider monitoring and evaluation to be necessary activities, but more work needs to be done to integrate plan monitoring and evaluation into the plan-making process to ensure that these practices are considered as part of the design and drafting of plans. Findings also indicate that provincial mandates have implications for how municipalities perceive monitoring and evaluation. These findings point to the need for fundamental guidance from the Province regarding plan monitoring and evaluation.

Further, it was observed that lack of plan monitoring and evaluation can be attributed to less visible factors including organizational attitudes, political realities, and awareness and education among existing and future planners. Thus, it is crucial to define the role of professional institutions like CPI and OPPI, the role of education institutions such as universities, and the role of ministry and provincial planners with regard to awareness-raising, education, and capacity building. Finally, there is an urgent need to educate planners and enhance their capacity to improve the current state of plan monitoring and evaluation.

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Lastly, I am grateful to this beautiful creation we call nature, to give me an opportunity to live and experience what we call life :)

Dedication

To this beautiful creation, to my mom, Sangita, and my dad, Dilipkumar. I am immensely grateful for everything they did for me.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Development of the Research Approach

Planning requires strategic management of diverse audiences, complex situations, and constant societal change. Budget constraints, political cycles, changing demographics, and limited resources have contributed to creating a planning context characterized by increasing complexity (Seasons, 2003; Seasons, 2021; Stevens, 2013). Planners invest tremendous energy into the creation of plans designed to address these and other challenges (Alexander, 2006; Seasons, 2003). Municipal planning activity is enabled and constrained by provincial acts and guidelines, regional Official Plans, and other local plans focused on specific issues. This policy framework dictates and guides changes that take place within cities (Fowler & Siegel, 2002; Sancton, 2000).

Plans are prepared based on visions for and by the community; these visions are then translated into goals, objectives, and targets, which then translate into policies (Guyadeen, 2017; Seasons, 2021). Some important questions arise here: Do planning actions align with the stated goals, objectives, and targets? Does the implementation process lead to the desired goals, objectives, and targets? What is the efficacy of planning interventions? Which factors impede or facilitate the implementation of plan policies? Given the role these plans play in dictating and/or guiding actions that have long-lasting implications for the regions in which they are implemented, we must consider the outcomes of the policies laid out in the plans. Plan monitoring and evaluation, if done effectively, has tremendous potential to optimize planning interventions and achieve the desired goals, objectives, and targets (Brody, 2003; Faehnle & Tyrväinen, 2013; Laurian & Shaw, 2009).

Monitoring and evaluation involve periodically monitoring a subject of interest and conducting analysis to determine its progress, alignment, performance, or outcome. The monitoring and evaluation have been applied in various contexts including the public, private and non-profit sectors (Oliveira and Pinho, 2011). This study focuses on monitoring and evaluation in planning, specifically plan evaluation. Two dimensions of monitoring and evaluation have developed in

unison since their conception in the early 1950s. The first dimension is program evaluation, and the second is plan evaluation (Alexander, E. R., 2011).

The primary difference between these concepts is that program evaluation relates to programs or projects. For example, a government's effort to develop and improve infrastructure involves several projects, and the evaluation of these projects individually and cumulatively forms program evaluation. In contrast, plan evaluation involves monitoring and evaluating the specific policies contained within a plan (e.g., comprehensive community plan). For example, several legislative acts, policies, plans, and guidelines are formed under different government organizations. Plan evaluation involves scrutinizing these policies and plans to consider their implications for implementation. Plan evaluation helps assess whether the actions performed under these plans/policies reflect their stated goals and objectives (Alexander, 2006; Khakee, 2003; Laurian et al., 2010; Lichfield, 1996; Oliveira & Pinho, 2011). It should be noted that the terms 'plan' and 'policy' are used interchangeably in some disciplines. In the context of this research, plan refers to official acts passed or legislated by the government, whereas policies are the individual statements that cumulatively compose a plan.

Program evaluation and plan evaluation were initially considered independent and mutually exclusive. When these concepts emerged, the rational comprehensive model promoted a rigorous and technically intensive approach to monitoring and evaluation. However, that did not lead to effective monitoring and evaluation of plans and policies because of the increased complexity of planning, reduced availability of resources, lack of skilled labor, and the delegation of responsibilities from federal to provincial and municipal governments made it difficult to conduct rigorous monitoring and evaluation (Bracken, 1981; Forester, 1988; Wegener, 1994). The challenges of managing political uncertainties, lack of expertise, budget constraints, and the diverse needs of stakeholders with varied interests also made it difficult to adhere to a resource-intensive and rigorous approach to monitoring and evaluation (Alkin, 2013; Bernstein, 2001; Higgins, 1986; Leeuw & Furubo, 2008; Siegel, 1993; Tindal & Tindal, 2000).

More recently, program evaluation has found a balance between technicality and practicality to better reflect the contemporary context. (Laurian et al., 2010). In the 2000s, reliance on the

rational comprehensive approach alone was significantly reduced. Rather, scholars and practitioners shifted to a modified approach that includes aspects of the rational comprehensive model and other qualitative, practical, and pragmatic approaches. Meanwhile, program evaluation emerged as an integral part of significant programs and projects. Plan evaluation researchers began to question the possibility of linking plan evaluation with program evaluation, and since then, contemporary research on plan evaluation has begun to look for connections and lessons from the field of program evaluation (Alexander, 2006).

The shift from the rational comprehensive model to the pragmatic approach for plan evaluation began to gain significant ground in the 2000s. Advances in the literature on the pragmatic approach for evaluation in planning can be seen during this time (Chess, 2000). The fundamental idea behind the pragmatic approach is to monitor and evaluate the implementation actions practically and pragmatically given available resources, without making the process so complex that it cannot be done at all. The approach involves the development of a feasible research design that identifies measurable and trackable indicators. With the use of the indicators, data can be collected consistently at pre-determined time intervals; the collected data can then be measured to generate results, which guide and direct further actions and decision-making. This approach is flexible to accommodate different planning organizations and contexts. Previous research also recommends integrating plan monitoring and evaluation with the plan-making process, as this is the best time to identify indicators that can be consistently monitored and evaluated (Chess, 2000; Hambleton & Thomas, 1995; Murphey, 1999).

Contemporary planning practice carries out monitoring and evaluation, but not in a consistent way that achieves optimal results. Indeed, evaluation is often underused or overlooked in urban and regional planning processes. It can be difficult for planners and other stakeholders to reach consensus about how to measure the success or failure of the plan and its specific interventions. In addition, there is no standard or mandated process in most Provinces and municipalities to monitor and evaluate plans, policies, and subsidiary actions to determine whether the plans' visions, goals, and objectives are being met. The current state of plan monitoring and evaluation

reveals a research gap that must be addressed to enhance the efficacy of plans and their policies (Seasons, 2003; Seasons, 2021; Stevens, 2013).

On a related theme, plan quality evaluation and content analysis evolved as an adjacent stream of plan evaluation. Plan quality evaluation deals with determining the quality of plans against the standards/parameters defined by researchers and scholars. Plan quality helps to determine whether, and the extent to which, a plan contains the pre-defined standards/parameters of what scholars consider a high-quality plan (Guyadeen, 2017; Guyadeen et al., 2019; Stevens, 2013). Since the 1990s, scholars have identified several criteria for assessing the quality of plans (Kaiser et al., 1995).

Recently, Guyadeen (2017) identified the parameters (i.e., factors or characteristics) for assessing the quality of Official Plans (known as comprehensive community plans in the United States). Guyadeen identifies nine principles for high-quality plans and lays out more than 50 parameters of high-quality Official Plans. Guyadeen (2017) used these parameters to conduct a content analysis of 63 Official Plans from municipalities within the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) Region in southern Ontario. This study identifies one principle and give indicators that deal with plan quality in terms of plan monitoring and evaluation. Guyadeen's (2017) findings indicate that the quality of the plans in terms of monitoring and evaluation was relatively low compared to other principles and parameters identified within the study. These findings, and the fact that there remains a need to implement a standard and robust plan monitoring and evaluation framework, informs the research design and methods for this thesis.

Based on a review of relevant literature, a set of parameters for plan monitoring and evaluation was developed. These parameters not only formed the foundation for the content analysis, but also provided the necessary background for qualitative review of the plans and reports. 20 parameters for plans, and 7 parameters for reports were identified, as in Figure 3.1. A review of the literature reveals that planning comprises several plans and policies functioning simultaneously. As such, while the Guyadeen (2017) study only considered Official Plans, this research also includes housing plans and strategic plans. The research adopted a mixed-methods approach by combining a content analysis to determine the efficacy of the plans in terms of plan

monitoring and evaluation with focused qualitative study of the plans and reports (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

1.2 Defining Important Terminologies on Plan Monitoring and Evaluation

A policy is a concept or a set of ideas or principles that an organization or individual creates to make sense of reality (Colebatch 1995). As such, policy is multifaceted and widely applicable. Although closely related to policy, plans have some distinct features (Baer, 1997; Ryan, 2011). Plans can be considered blueprints containing the steps to turn a vision into practical actions. Ideally, plans contain facts, visions, objectives, goals, targets, and implementation strategies. Thus, the primary distinction between plans and policies is that policies are a set of written principles that guide or dictate a course of action, while plans are a blueprint for the implementation of visions, objectives, goals, and targets (Adhikari, 2017).

Programs are defined as clusters of activities that are intended to achieve pre-determined outcomes based on a defined set of objectives (McDavid & Hawthorn, 2006; Pal, 2013). Programs are conceptualized as a medium that transforms available resources into desired activities to deliver intended or pre-determined outcomes (McDavid & Hawthorn, 2006). Monitoring is defined as a periodic-cyclic-continuous process wherein the in-situ activities happening within policies, plans, or programs are assessed and evaluated. Monitoring comprises regular, consistent, and systematic collection and documentation of the components of these activities. Evaluation is defined as a system wherein the observed outcomes of a policy, plan, or program are assessed and compared with a set of explicit or implicit indicators/standards (if identified). The prime intent is to improve the policy, plan, or program to achieve the goals and outcomes established during the conception of the policy, plan, or program.

Finally, Weiss (1998) defines indicators as categories or parameters arranged linearly or hierarchically. The in-situ activities happening day-to-day are documented periodically in accordance with these pre-determined categories or parameters. These documented observations are then analyzed or evaluated to derive the necessary results.

1.3 Research Approach and Research Questions

This study uses a mixed-methods approach, specifically content analysis and focused qualitative observations, to examine plan quality with regard to monitoring and evaluation. Content analysis is a systematic process of identifying and coding the parameters deemed necessary within a plan to determine the extent of presence or absence of these crucial parameters within the plans under study (Orr, 2010).

The literature review clearly portrays the importance of the plan monitoring and evaluation process and the benefits of this process. If done correctly, plan monitoring and evaluation facilitate the implementation of the policies within the plans to bring the desired outcome that these plans/policies envision (Alexander, 2006; Seasons, 2021; Stevens, 2013). The study has targeted 15 highly populated upper and single-tier municipalities to understand the current state of the plan quality in terms of plan monitoring and evaluation. Official Plans, housing plans, and strategic plans for all 15 municipalities were reviewed using both the qualitative and content analysis approaches. In addition, the monitoring and evaluation reports available under these three plans were analyzed with the parameters deemed important for the reports in mind. Figure 3.2 depicts the research design along with the specific methods used to conduct this study.

The study addresses the following research questions:

- What is the current state of plan quality from a monitoring and evaluation perspective for the major upper-tier and single-tier municipalities in Ontario?
- Are there similarities (or differences) between the quality of the Official Plans and other plans (housing plans and strategic plans) in terms of monitoring and evaluation in these municipalities?
- Does the provincial mandate influence the quality of plans in terms of monitoring and evaluation in these municipalities?

1.4 High Plan Quality Parameters from a Plan Monitoring and Evaluation Perspective

Table 2.1 provides an in-depth justification for the parameters deemed high-quality plan parameters for plan monitoring and evaluation. Table 2.2 identifies and justifies the parameters deemed high-quality plan parameters for the reports prepared under the plans (Brody, 2003; Lyles & Stevens, 2014; Stevens, 2013). These parameters are listed below:

High-quality plan parameters:

Parameters for overall plan quality in terms of monitoring and evaluation:

1. Prioritized goals/policies
2. Measurable goals/policies
3. Targets and/or milestones
4. Linking goals/policies with monitoring/evaluation
5. Directions to monitor/evaluate
6. Referring other plans (horizontally and vertically)
7. Delegation of monitoring/evaluation

Parameters on indicators:

8. Mention of indicators
9. Directions to prepare indicators
10. Classification of indicators (stakeholder focused indicators)

Parameters from the plan monitoring and evaluation process breakdown:

11. Section for implementation
12. Section for monitoring/evaluation
13. Objectives of monitoring/evaluation
14. Research questions
15. Research design with research methods
16. Inclusion of qualitative approach/methods

17. Evaluation champion/team
18. Resource allocation for plan monitoring/evaluation
19. Frequency of monitoring/evaluation
20. Communication strategy

High-quality report parameters:

1. Linking with plans
2. Directions/details on monitoring and evaluation
3. Connects to research question / identify research questions
4. Research design with research methods
5. Mixed-methods approach/methods
6. Generation of findings, conclusions, and recommendations from research
7. Robust communication strategy

1.5 Results and Conclusion

The most significant finding of this study is the lack of integration of the plan monitoring and evaluation process with the plan-making process. None of the 15 municipalities reviewed have identified a framework that connects monitoring and evaluation with the plan-making process. Many of the challenges associated with developing a robust plan monitoring and evaluation framework can be resolved by efforts to integrate plan monitoring and evaluation in the plan-making process. Currently, plan monitoring and evaluation is considered a component of the individual plans, and efforts to identify some sort of plan monitoring and evaluation framework are made after the policies are drafted. However, the plan monitoring and evaluation process should be understood as a framework which is integrated with the planning (plan-making and implementation) framework.

Another notable observation that emerged from this study is the general lack of importance assigned to plan monitoring and evaluation. There seems to be a natural preference among planners for the plan-making process and the creation of detail-oriented plans, while monitoring and evaluation is often overlooked (Alexander, 2006; Season 2021; Stevens, 2013). The absence

of important monitoring and evaluation parameters in most plans clearly demonstrates a lack of emphasis on plan monitoring and evaluation.

Further, the plans in this study performed poorly in terms of the detail-oriented parameters that are at the core of the plan monitoring and evaluation processes. These parameters relate to research questions, research design with research methods, qualitative approaches/methods and communication strategy. The primary reason for the poor performance in this regard is the absence of a robust plan monitoring and evaluation process that should have been developed alongside the plan-making process.

It was observed in most of the plans that the goals, objectives and policies are drafted in vague terms; they lack a clear indication of time, targets, and measurability for outcomes and impacts. This vagueness could be attributed to lack of awareness or concern about not achieving the stated targets among plan makers. It might also be the case that local politicians and some planners might not want to learn about less desirable outcomes from their planning decisions.

It is important to raise awareness among planners about the importance of plan monitoring and evaluation. Unless greater importance is assigned to the plan monitoring and evaluation process, a robust plan monitoring and evaluation framework for municipalities in Ontario will not be realized. Planners must understand that the creation of detail-oriented and resource-intensive plans is important, but without the simultaneous creation of plan monitoring and evaluation processes for assessing the alignment of actions with overarching goals and objectives, it will be difficult to generate desired results. Thus, I argue that a plan with a robust plan monitoring and evaluation process will generate better results than a well-developed plan without a monitoring and evaluation process.

Two final observations from this study relate to the impact of the provincial mandate on the quality of plans from a plan monitoring and evaluation perspective. First, most of the policies reviewed had targets assigned for intensification, employment, affordable housing, transit-oriented development, growth and development in different land use designations, source water protection, forest cover, open space, and parklands, and cycling and parking infrastructure.

Beyond these, few of the policies had measurable targets. The presence of measurable policies with specific targets in the plans can be attributed to the provincial mandate that require targets on these aspects of planning. Second, there is an observed upsurge in the housing plans' results compared to the Official Plans under the content analysis exercise. (Table 5.1 Comparison between Official Plans and Housing Plans Score Parameter-wise presents this upsurge in the housing plans compared to the Official Plans). The prime reason for the upsurge is that the housing plans considered in this study are the ten-year housing and homelessness plans for all the municipalities. Under the Housing Service Act (2011), municipalities are mandated to prepare a list of action items along with a description of targets to measure progress. The municipalities are also mandated to prepare annual reports to present to the Council and the ministry. This mandatory requirement by the Province has driven more municipalities to include the mandatory aspects of plan monitoring and evaluation in the housing plans. This observation demonstrates the impact of the provincial mandate on plan quality from a monitoring and evaluation perspective.

1.6 Structure of Thesis

This section explains the structure and outline of this thesis. The thesis comprises five chapters as listed below:

1. Introduction
2. Literature Review
3. Research Design and Methodology
4. Results and Discussion
5. Synthesis, Conclusion and Recommendations

Introduction

The introduction provides preliminary information about the context of plan monitoring and evaluation in planning. The chapter then touches briefly on the evolution of monitoring and evaluation as an area of study. The differences between plan evaluation and program evaluation are then explained. The introduction also describes the current state of plan monitoring and

evaluation and introduces the research gap this study addresses. The chapter also provides important definitions and describes the mixed-methods approach taken to address the research questions. Finally, the chapter touches on the most important conclusions of the thesis.

Literature Review

The literature review includes foundational information relevant to the topic of study. The review defines relevant concepts and terms and explores the evolution of the concept of plan monitoring and evaluation. Next, the chapter classifies the diverse aspects of program evaluation and plan evaluation. The chapter also explains the policy framework in Ontario given the study's focus on 15 of the most highly populated municipalities in Ontario. The chapter then provides a rationale for the importance of plan monitoring and evaluation and describes the current state of plan monitoring and evaluation as well as challenges.

The literature review then links plan monitoring and evaluation with plan quality by identifying parameters that indicate the quality of plans from a plan monitoring and evaluation perspective. The chapter derives these parameters from a robust plan monitoring and evaluation framework identified in the literature. The chapter concludes by identifying the research gap the study addresses and providing a justification for the research.

Research Design and Methodology

This chapter begins with the identification of the research questions. The chapter then provides an overview of the sample for the study (15 highly populated upper-tier and single-tier municipalities across Ontario) and introduces the relevant planning and policy frameworks. The chapter also provides a detailed justification for the high-quality plan parameters identified in the literature review. Having established the context for the study, the chapter discusses the research design and the specific research methods used, including a description of the sample, data collection, coding protocols, analysis techniques, and research limitations.

Results and Discussions

This chapter describes the results from the thematic analysis (qualitative segment) and the content analysis (quantitative segment), which were conducted individually. The chapter informs the final chapter on key findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

Synthesis, Conclusion and Recommendation

The final chapter synthesizes the results discussed in the previous chapter. The chapter synthesizes the qualitative and quantitative results individually, then cumulatively, to reveal the thematic patterns observed during the qualitative study and the findings from the quantitative content analysis. The chapter then provides final recommendations and concludes by identifying best practices and areas for further research.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Defining Monitoring and Evaluation

This section begins by defining the concepts and terminology related to monitoring and evaluation: policy, plan, program, program evaluation, plan evaluation, indicators, monitoring, and evaluation. These terms are represented visually in Figure 2.1.

'Policy' is multifaceted and widely applicable. As defined by Colebatch (1995), policy is a concept or set of ideas/principles created to make sense of reality. Policies are written to carry out actions in a manner that directs/leads or guides/facilitates the desired outcomes. Policies incorporate numerous participants ranging from governments and corporations to NGOs and civil society actors. Although closely related to policies, 'plans' are a distinct concept (Baer, 1997; Ryan, 2011). Plans can be understood as blueprints containing the steps to turn a vision into action. Ideally, plans contain facts, visions, objectives, goals, targets, and implementation strategies. Plans can address various aspects of community development (e.g., land development plans, climate change plans, waste management plans, environmental plans) (Berke et al., 2006).

In summary, the major distinction between policies and plans is that policies are a set of written principles/guidelines that guide or dictate a course of action, while plans provide visions, objectives, goals, and targets as well as steps for implementation (Adhikari, 2017). It is important to note that plans and policies should not be understood as occupying different spaces within a hierarchy. There are instances where plans must abide by certain policies, and at the same time, there are policies within the plans that drive action. For example, in Ontario, the provincial government has prepared *A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* (2019); and the *Provincial Policy Statement* (2020). The Official Plans that are prepared in municipalities in Ontario should abide by the policies laid out in the PPS. At the same time, the Official Plan contains the policies that guide implementation on the ground.

'Programs' are defined as clusters of activities that are intended to achieve pre-determined outcomes based on a defined set of objectives (McDavid & Hawthorn, 2006; Pal, 2013). Programs are conceptualized as a medium that transforms available resources into desired activities to deliver sets of intended or pre-determined outcomes (McDavid & Hawthorn, 2006)¹.

'Evaluation' is defined as a system wherein the operations or outcomes of a policy, plan, or program are assessed and compared with set of explicit or implicit indicators/standards, focusing on the improvement of the respective policy, plan or program (Weiss, 1998). Pal (2013, 288) defines evaluation as "*...a scientific, systematic, empirically oriented, applied discipline or set of disciplines that analyzes current programs to generate intelligent information that can be used to improve those programs or the decision processes that produced them.*"

'Monitoring' is defined as a periodic-cyclic-continuous process wherein the in-situ activities happening within policies, plans or programs are assessed and evaluated. Monitoring comprises regular, consistent, and systematic collection and documentation of these activities. As Rossi et al. (1999) state, the primary motive of monitoring is to determine whether the activities are aligned with some pre-determined standards/indicators. Weiss (1998, 333) precisely defines monitoring as "*an ongoing assessment of program operations conducted during implementation...to assess whether activities are being delivered as planned, are reaching the target population, and are using resources appropriately.*" Rossie et al. (1999, 206) stress that an evaluation without monitoring is like researching in a "black box" with no knowledge, understanding, or awareness of what is happening in reality. Pal (2013) concludes that the systematic monitoring and interpretation of actions contained within policies, plans, or programs lays the foundation of result-oriented management systems.

¹ Again, policies, plans and programs should not be perceived as a hierarchy. Some policies contain several plans, under which there can be several programs. In other cases, there may be several plans and/or policies designed to generate the desired outcomes of a specified program, which could have been designed as part of a major policy/plan.

It is important to note that monitoring is an integral part of implementation. In contrast, evaluation includes not only the evaluation of the data collected during the monitoring stage, but also the evaluation of the entire policy, plan, or program near or after the termination or maturity².

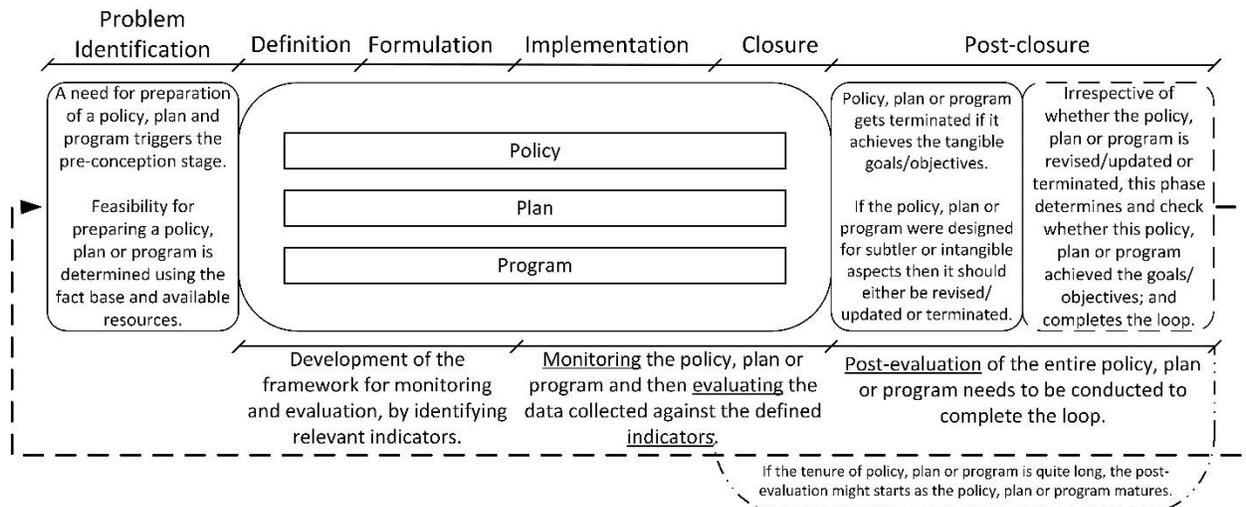


Figure 2.1 Monitoring and Evaluation Explained

Indicators lay the foundation for the monitoring process, and hence the evaluation process. Indicators form a basis for collecting data which is then monitored and evaluated to derive results. These results help gauge progress and support informed decision-making that maintains both the performance and conformance of the respective policy, plan, or program with its objectives, goals, or targets (Fitzpatrick et al., 2011; Newcomer et al., 2015). Indicators can generate either qualitative or quantitative results which can inform for short-term decision-making or long-term learning.

Weiss (1998) states that indicators comprise categories or parameters arranged linearly or hierarchically; the in-situ activities happening day-to-day are documented periodically in congruence with these pre-determined categories or parameters (indicators). The documented results are then evaluated to derive the necessary results. As Pal (2013) explains, this periodic

² It is important to understand that monitoring supports two dimensions of evaluation. The data collected during the monitoring stage will determine whether the evaluation will generate results that improve the performance, the conformance, or both. This is explained further in the section “Evaluation Breakdown and Approaches to Evaluation”.

collection and interpretation of data helps establish the progress of a policy, plan, or program in accordance with its respective objectives, goals, or targets. Hoernig and Seasons (2004) suggest that the process of monitoring and evaluation includes a conceptual model and framework which should run in parallel with the framework of the respective policy, plan, or program for which the monitoring and evaluation framework was developed.

2.2 Evolution of Monitoring and Evaluation

Understanding Program Evaluation and Evaluation in Planning

Program evaluation and evaluation in planning, despite operating in different disciplines, are closely related and share a theoretical foundation. Patton (2008, 38) defines program evaluation as *"the systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics, and results of programs to make judgments about the program, improve or further develop program effectiveness, inform decisions about future programming, and/or increase our understanding."*

Evaluation in planning, also known as plan evaluation, shares the goal of systematically collecting and analyzing information. However, while plan evaluation focuses on the evaluation of plans, policies within the plans, the planning processes, and the outcomes resulting from such plans (Laurian et al., 2010), program evaluation focuses on the activities or operations conducted under a specific program. More specifically, plan evaluation evaluates the outcomes of the plan against explicit or implicit information (also known as indicators) which are defined during the plan formation phase. This evaluation determines whether, and to what extent, the plan achieved its intended results/outcomes and stated goals/objectives (Alexander, 2011).

2.2.1 Early in the 1950s and 1960s

Evaluation generally, and program evaluation specifically, gained the attention of scholars in the early 1960s. At this time, evaluation was understood quite broadly and was applied to a range of sectors including health, education, and social welfare (Guyadeen & Seasons, 2018). In planning, the principles of evaluation were influenced by rational comprehensive planning practice and theory (Thomas & Hambleton, 1995). At this time, the focus was on an analytical approach to evaluation in planning, although planners ultimately realized that it would not be feasible to

incorporate these lengthy approaches in practice (Bracken, 1981; Forester, 1988; Lee, 1994). Evaluation in planning was also considered independent from program evaluation (Guyadeen & Seasons, 2018).

2.2.2 From the 1970s to 1990s...

By the 1970s, monitoring and evaluation in planning found its place in research and was widely discussed among planning scholars (Boyce, 1970; Calkins, 1979; Dakin, 1973; Dueker, 1970; Hemmens, 1968; Teitz, 1968). However, the literature published during this era remained highly technical and analytical, and included highly structured, technical, and quantitative analyses of planning processes and plan objectives/goals. Some analyses included in-depth computer modelling exercises (Alterman & Hill, 1978; Hill, 1968; Lichfield, N. et al., 1975; McLoughlin, 1970), and used techniques including Cost-benefit analysis (CBA)/Cost-effectiveness analysis (CES)/Fiscal Impact Analysis; Planning Balance Sheet Analysis (PBSA); Goals Achievement Matrix (GAM)/Multi-attribute Utility Theory (MAUT).

Planning researchers and practitioners attempted to incorporate these rigorous analytical approaches in plan monitoring and evaluation practice from the 1970s to the 1990s. However, planners realized that it was challenging to integrate these practices given the consideration of time, cost, resources, skilled labor, and the amount of data to be managed. Hence, the rational comprehensive approach to monitoring and evaluation in planning evaluation became less prevalent (Bracken, 1981; Forester, 1988; Lee, 1994). Following the decline of the classic rational comprehensive approach in planning, the pragmatic evaluation approach emerged in the early 1990s to remedy the challenges associated with time and resource constraints (Nutt & Backoff, 1992).

During this period, new decision-making technologies emerged (Talen, 1996a; Talen, 1996b), more explicit plan evaluation criteria were developed (Baer, 1997; Lichfield, 1996; Shefer & Kaess, 1990; Wegener, 1994) and research on the use of indicators drastically expanded (Bauer, 1966; Maslove, 1973; Stewart, 1975). Local/municipal governments also cultivated their interest in monitoring and evaluation as several political, economic, financial, social, cultural, and

environmental issues shifted the attention of local/municipal governments toward monitoring and evaluation (Alkin, 2013; Bernstein, 2001; Higgins, 1986; Leeuw & Furubo, 2008; Siegel, 1993; Tindal & Tindal, 2000).

2.2.3 Around the 2000s and 2010s

Following the shift from the rational comprehensive model to the pragmatic approach for plan evaluation, the literature on the pragmatic approach to evaluation in planning expanded in the 2000s. The fundamental idea behind the pragmatic planning approach is to monitor and evaluate implementation actions practically and pragmatically given available resources, without making the process so complex that it cannot be practiced at all.

This approach involves the development of a feasible research design that identifies measurable indicators. With the use of the indicators, data can be collected consistently at pre-determined time intervals and measured to generate results. The results then guide and direct further actions and decision-making. This approach is flexible to accommodate diverse planning contexts. The literature recommends integrating plan monitoring and evaluation with the plan-making process, as this is the best time to identify indicators that can be consistently monitored and evaluated (Chess, 2000; Murphey, 1999; Thomas & Hambleton, 1995).

Despite this expansion in the literature throughout the 2000s, the application of monitoring and evaluation in planning largely remained limited to growth management policies, assessments of sustainability, and the periodic update of Official Plans (known as comprehensive municipal plans in the United States) (Berke, Philip & Conroy, 2000). Further, it was determined that monitoring and evaluation is either generally understood incorrectly or is altogether absent in planning practice (Brody & Highfield, 2005; Laurian et al., 2010). Studies found it challenging to identify clear causal linkages between plans and plan outcomes because there is a lack of clarity about how to define and measure the success or failure of policies, plans, or programs. As Talen (1996a; 1996b) notes, it is of utmost difficulty to determine the changes brought by these policies, plans, or programs without proper evaluation. In a qualitative study, Seasons (2003, 437) identified "lack of resources (e.g., constraints of time, staff capacity, and financial resources), political

realities, organizational culture, and poorly developed evaluation methods” as significant factors impeding evaluation in planning.

In contrast, the program evaluation field progressed significantly during this time. Program evaluation is used extensively in disciplines including social services, education, and health. Moreover, there are mandated policy-driven and legislated obligations to evaluate in these disciplines (Oliveira & Pinho, 2011)³. Agency reporting requirements have made program evaluation an integral part of the program development process, and the resources required to evaluate are set aside well in advance of program development (Cousins et al., 2014). Evaluation requirements also ensure that goals and objectives are written in a clear, consistent, and measurable manner to provide direct linkages between the program and the intended outcomes. Thus, there are rarely concerns about establishing causality between the program and its outcomes (McDavid & Hawthorn, 2006; Posavac & Carey, 2007). Given the rapid development of the program evaluation field, planning experts began to consider the possibility of linking evaluation in planning with program evaluation. However, more research is needed to apply important learnings from the field of program evaluation to plan evaluation.

2.2.4 Contemporary State

Contemporary urban and regional planning practice does monitor, evaluate, and use indicators in practice, but only to a limited extent. Unlike program evaluation, evaluation in planning is still underused and at times is overlooked in planning practice. There is not a standard procedure whereby planners and other stakeholders can reach consensus about how to measure the success or failure of a plan and its interventions. Thus, there is a gap in this area of planning, both in terms of research and practice (Guyadeen & Seasons, 2016).

³ The mandated obligation to evaluate helped the field of program evaluation develop extensively over the same timeframe in which the evaluation of planning was unable to develop. Guyadeen (2018) also concluded that the provincial government should provide a framework for integrating monitoring and evaluation in planning practice. Thus, government intervention plays a major role in monitoring and evaluation. This point is discussed further in the later sections.

Research in the field of evaluation in planning continues to focus on the integration of plan monitoring and evaluation in planning practice. Alexander (2006) and Khakee (2003) studied the theoretical aspects of the evolution of program evaluation and evaluation in planning. Laurian et al. (2010) and Oliveira and Pinho (2009, 2010a, 2010b, 2011) developed planning-specific monitoring and evaluation methodologies based on the learnings from the field of program evaluation. Finally, Guyadeen and Seasons have done extensive work on plan quality (Guyadeen & Seasons, 2016; Guyadeen, 2018; Guyadeen & Seasons, 2018; Guyadeen et al., 2019; Seasons, 2003; Seasons, 2021). These scholars have concluded that further research in the field of monitoring and evaluation in planning (both exploratory and analytical) is necessary.

2.3 Understanding the Approaches, Forms and Types of Monitoring and Evaluation

Figure 2.2 provides a breakdown of the types, forms, and approaches to both program evaluation and evaluation in planning. This section defines and explains evaluation breakdown in detail to provide clarity⁴.

There are four major approaches to program evaluation that have evolved over time: post-positivism, pragmatism, interpretivism, and critical normative science. There are also two major types of evaluations in program evaluation: formative evaluation and summative evaluation. Other types of evaluation have developed under the umbrella of formative and summative evaluations, namely process evaluation, outcome or result-based evaluation, utilization-focused evaluation, and participatory evaluation.

Post-positivism was science-driven. This approach was characterized by highly technical methods including rigorous quantitative analysis. As Greene (1994) states, this method primarily focuses on measuring the efficiencies and effectiveness of programs. It is important to notice that this method was evolved when the rational comprehensive model was dominant.

⁴ 'Approaches to evaluation' refers to the way in which the evaluators approach the evaluation, whereas 'types of evaluation' means the different types of evaluation performed based on the relevance of program, plan, or policy. To generalize, each type of evaluation can be approached differently.

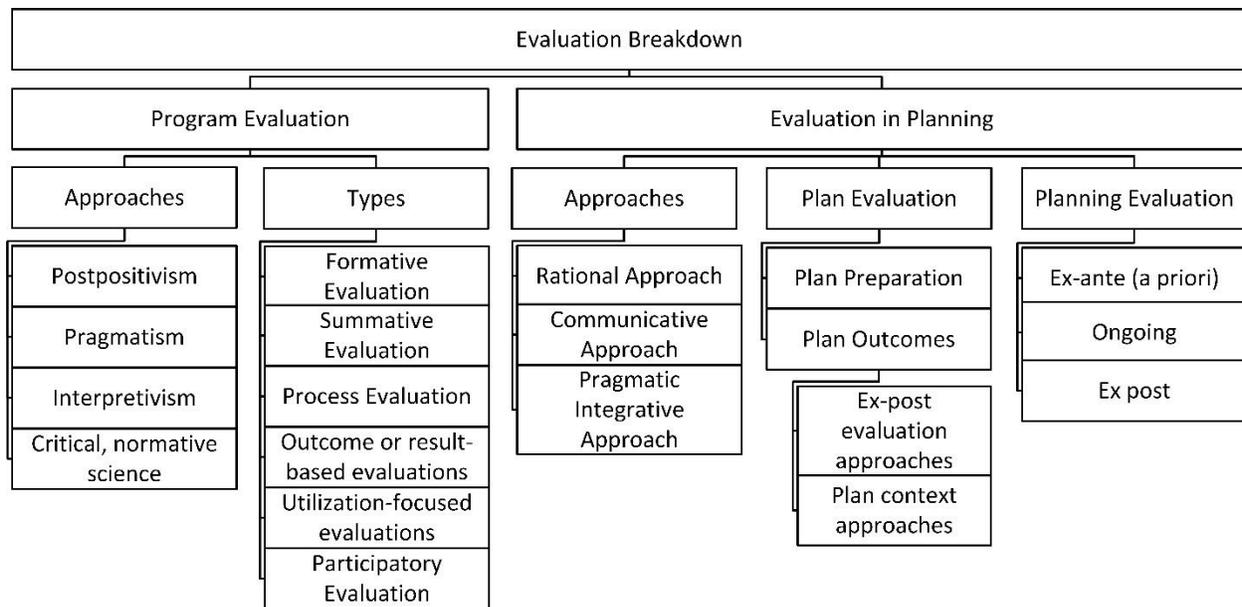


Figure 2.2 Evaluation Breakdown

Pragmatism evolved in response to over-dependency on the post-positivist approach. Pragmatism adopts a more practical approach and argues that rather than simply focusing on scientific and quantitative statistics, it is important for an evaluation approach to align with the program and the type of evaluation required (Alkin, 2013; Greene, 1994). Interpretivism has roots in philosophy and attempts to understand the way things happen. This approach incorporates qualitative research methods into evaluation, considering the needs and perspectives of diverse stakeholders (Greene, 1994).

Finally, the normative approach emphasizes negotiation, discussion, and collaboration with diverse stakeholders as a critical part of the evaluation process. As Alkin (2013) states, *"In this phase, evaluators attempt to acknowledge and recognize the multiple realities and stakeholder perspectives associated with the evaluation process"*. Some other approaches that closely align with the normative approach are developmental evaluation (Patton, 2010), collaborative evaluation (Rodriguez-Campos, 2012), and empowerment evaluation (Fetterman, 2004).

Regarding the types of program evaluation, formative evaluation is incorporated during the program's operational phase, focusing on improving current activities or operations. Formative evaluation generates immediate analysis that helps decision-makers enhance efficiency and

prioritize activities that support the achievement of the prescribed outcomes (McDavid & Hawthorn, 2006; Posavac & Carey, 2007; Shadish et al., 1991). In contrast, summative evaluation considers how the program performed in its entirety. This type of evaluation helps decision-makers determine whether the program achieved its desired outcomes, goals, and objectives. Summative evaluations are generally conducted when programs are near maturity to inform decisions about whether the program should be continued or revised (McDavid & Hawthorn, 2006; Posavac & Carey, 2007; Shadish et al., 1991).

There are three primary approaches to evaluation in planning: conformance-based approach/rational approach, performance-based approach/communicative approach, and the pragmatic/integrative approach. The conformance-based approach views the plan as a blueprint; the policies within the plan translate to actions that generate the intended goals/objectives (Berke et al., 2006; Laurian et al., 2010). Evaluation is considered successful only up to the extent that the plan's goals/objectives were achieved in practice (Alexander, 2011; Oliveira & Pinho, 2010a). In contrast, the performance-based approach views plan as guidelines for planners and evaluators. The plans are thus considered successful if the practitioners consult them regularly with no compulsion to abide by the plans and their policies. (Alexander, 2006; Faludi, 2000; Faludi, 2006; Mastop & Faludi, 1997). In the pragmatic- integrative approach, a conformance, performance, or combined approach can be selected based on the context and function of the plan (Alexander, 2006). A shift toward the pragmatic integrative approach is appealing for contemporary planning practice because it allows evaluators to approach the plans in a context-specific manner (Alexander, 2006; Balsas, 2012; Hoch, 2002; Oliveira & Pinho, 2010a).

As shown in Figure 2.2, evaluation in planning takes two primary forms: plan evaluation and planning evaluation. Plan evaluation deals with evaluating the plan itself, whereas planning evaluation deals with the evaluation of the planning process. Plan evaluation consists of plan quality evaluation, plan implementation evaluation, and plan outcomes evaluation. Planning evaluation involves evaluating the planning processes associated with a given plan (Morckel, 2010).

There are three types or phases of planning evaluation: ex-ante (or a priori), ongoing, and ex-post. These phases of evaluation closely align with the different stages of the planning process, that is, plan preparation, plan implementation, and plan revision (Oliveira and Pinho, 2010a). Ex-ante (or a priori) evaluation deals with the formation of the plan – after identifying the problem, the goals/objectives, available resources, and desired outcomes, the best available solution or strategy is analyzed and then selected (Khakee, 2003; Roberts, 2006).

Ongoing evaluation deals with plan implementation. During the ongoing evaluation, the planning actions/interventions are monitored against the pre-determined indicators to make informed decisions and ensure actions align with the desired outcomes (Oliveira and Pinho, 2010a). Ex-post evaluation applies when the plan is near maturity. Like summative evaluation in the context of program evaluation, the primary purpose of the ex-post evaluation is to determine whether the planning actions/interventions achieved the pre-determined goals/objectives/outcomes. If not, ex-post evaluation explores why the planning processes did not achieve the desired goals/objectives/outcomes (Khakee, 2003; Laurian et al., 2010).

Under plan evaluation, there are two dimensions to evaluate: plan preparation and plan outcomes. In the case of plan preparation, evaluation runs in conjunction with the ex-ante (a priori) evaluation, which considers different solution alternatives to find the best fit with the plan's goals and objectives. In the case of plan outcome evaluations, there are two possible approaches: the ex-post evaluation approach and the plan context approach⁵. Ex-post evaluation evaluates plan outcomes in a prescriptive manner – here, the evaluation process seeks to determine whether the plan achieved its pre-determined outcomes (Guyadeen & Seasons, 2018).

2.4 Understanding the Planning System and Policy Framework in Ontario

Canada follows the federal system of government with the sovereign power distributed between two levels of government: the federal government and the provincial government. Under the

⁵ Note that plan outcome evaluation is used quite less in practice as compared to the plan preparation evaluation. And, a discussion behind the reasons for this under use, as well, the rationale to include plan outcome evaluation is provided in further sections.

Canadian Constitution, planning is recognized as a provincial responsibility. To fulfill this responsibility, each Province and territory has established a planning framework. There are some commonalities and differences observed within the planning frameworks of the Provinces and territories.

The Ontario provincial government has delegated municipal powers, functional responsibility, and the responsibility to generate revenue to local governments/municipalities under planning regime (Sancton, 2000). The provincial government imposes financial and legal restrictions on local governments to ensure these governments function in a specific manner determined by the provincial government (Fowler & Siegel, 2002). Aside from these restrictions, a significant amount of land use planning power is delegated to local governments by the provincial government. To ensure alignment, municipalities have established a hierarchy of policies/plans where the lower/subsidiary plans should align with the municipality's upper/primary plans (refer to Figure 2.3).

Planning Acts and Municipal Acts exist at the top of the legislative hierarchy to govern provincial and territorial planning frameworks⁶. Next on the hierarchy, the provinces and territories provide a statutory framework under which there are plans to provide guidance, vision, and direction to local governments. The provincial plans for directing and guiding planning in Ontario include, but are not limited to, the Provincial Policy Statement (2020), the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2019), the Greenbelt Plan (2017), and the Niagara Escarpment Plan (2017). Finally, detailed land-use planning is delegated to local governments that prepare the plans in accordance with upper-level policies/plans (Cullingworth, 2017; Hodge & Gordon, 2014). The lower-level plans prepared by municipalities also follow a hierarchy of comprehensive community plans (Official Plans in Ontario), district plans (secondary plans in Ontario), subdivision plans, and site plans.

⁶ There can also be other acts in place that run parallel to planning and municipal acts, such as environmental acts, climate change acts, or sustainability acts. These additional acts help strengthen and complement the planning legislation.

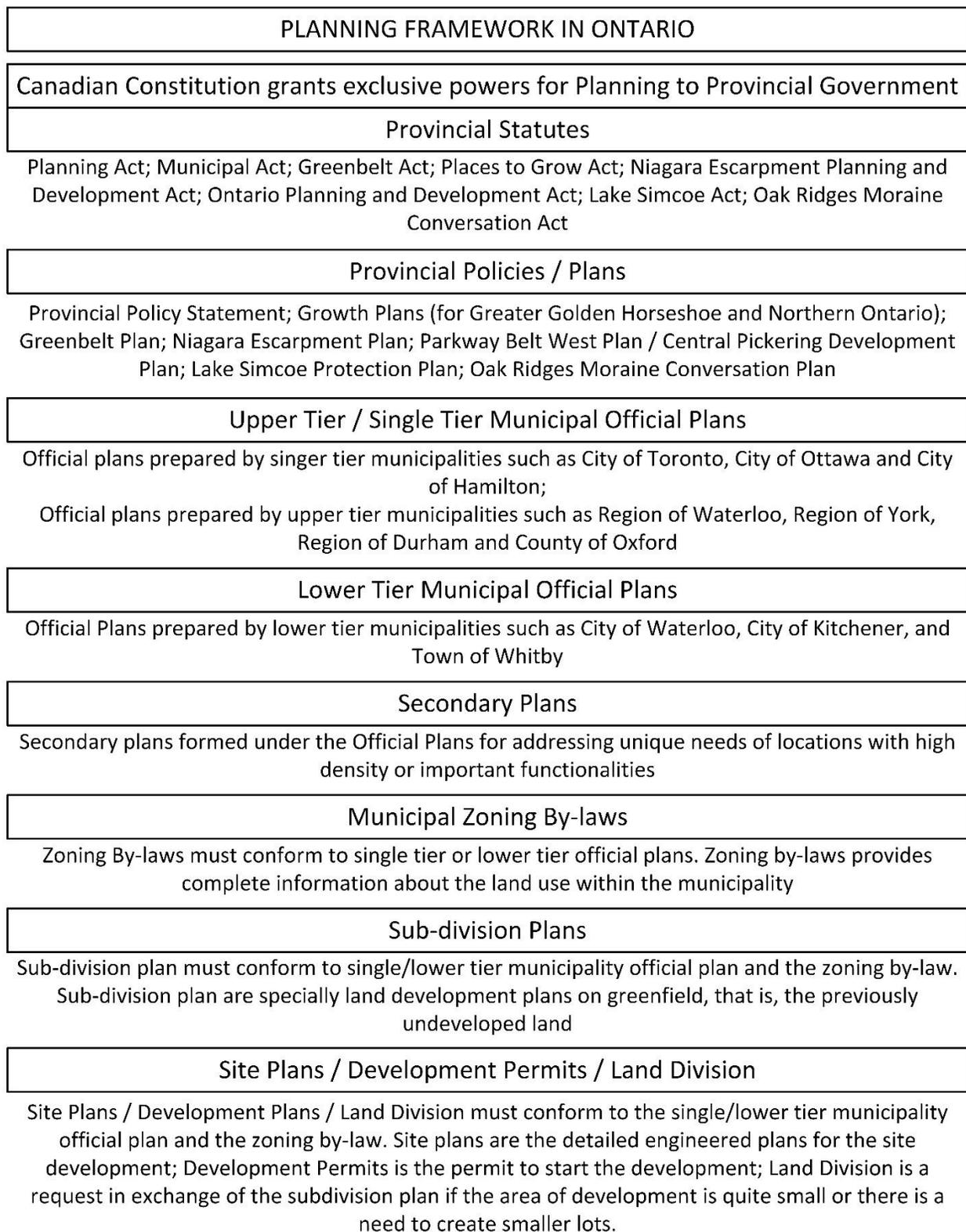


Figure 2.3 Planning Framework in Ontario

Figure 2.3 depicts the hierarchical planning framework that applies in Ontario. In Ontario, local governments/municipalities must conform to the direction provided by the provincial government. Hence, the Official Plans prepared by municipalities must be approved by the local Council and the provincial government⁷. Secondary plans are prepared by either the lower tier or single-tier municipalities in accordance with policies and plans listed above. Secondary plans are focused plans that are generally included as amendments within the Official Plan. Secondary plans focus on regions within the municipality that are highly dense or serve a significant purpose.

Along with secondary plans, zoning by-laws are prepared by the lower or single-tier municipalities. A zoning by-law is a technical document that dictates land use patterns within the municipality. The document contains different zones for different land-use purposes (e.g., commercial, residential, industrial, institutional); any development must conform to the zoning by-law.

Finally, there are subdivision plans, land division plans, site plans, and development permits, as shown in Figure 2.3. Subdivision plans are prepared for green fields or previously undeveloped lands; land division plans are prepared for partition of pre-defined land zones or for developing small areas of land; site plans are the engineered documents that contain details about the construction and infrastructure needed for the development of the respective sites; development permits are granted by the municipality to commence the development (only if the developers abide by all the conditions).

This study will focus on the Official Plans and secondary plans prepared by either the single-tier or upper-tier municipalities.

2.5 Acknowledging the Role of Monitoring and Evaluation in Planning

Planning is carried out in the public interest – that is, to enhance the public good through planning interventions. Planners use public resources to execute the visions of a community by creating

⁷ In Ontario (two-tier government), Official Plan Official Plans prepared by the lower tier government are approved by the upper-tier government.

plans and visions that capture the needs of diverse stakeholders. However, planners face challenges while implementing these visions, especially in the context of uncertainty and multiple stakeholder perspectives. Planners also face challenges related to navigating the political environment. These challenges can lead to poorly informed decision-making, missed opportunities, and misuse of limited resources, all of which affect the planner's political and professional standing (Minnery et al., 1993). As such, many planners remain unsure about the effectiveness, efficiency, or impact of their actions (Baum, 2001; Christensen, 1985; Hodge, 1986; Sawicki & Flynn, 1996) and many planners have considerable trouble assessing whether their work is "good" or "bad" (Alexander & Faludi, 1989; Baer, 1997).

In the context described above, planning and planners have been criticized for being costly, highly regulatory, and unable to bring about change (Laurian et al., 2010). This perception impedes the value of plans and planning interventions from the perspective of stakeholders (Millard-Ball, 2012). Systematic and periodic monitoring and evaluation with regular communication of results represent a promising solution to these challenges. If done correctly, this practice can help planners communicate the underlying reasons for the success or failure of any planning intervention (Davidson, 2005).

Much monitoring and evaluation in planning is done informally, where planners draw conclusions about the state of their interventions based on available information, resources, and experience (Alexander, 2006). Planners are also required to update, monitor, and report on aspects of planning deemed mandatory by the Province. Beyond this, planners do not appear to monitor and evaluate plans and planning interventions in a standardized manner. Indeed, planners seem to lack a standardized, systematic, and periodic monitoring and evaluation method that effectively gauges performance and reveals underlying reasons for the success or failure of planning interventions (Seasons, 2003, 2021).

2.5.1 Benefits of Evaluation in Planning

Benefits of Evaluation in Planning					
Planning Interventions	Plans	Builds Causality	Inter-Organizational	Communication	Builds Empirical Database
Increases credibility and legitimacy of planning process and interventions	Develops a pragmatic, evidence-based approach to decision-making by basing plans and policies on sound, established reasoning	Provides an objective and systematic approach to study plans, improve the plan preparation process, and assess whether plans achieved their stated goals and objectives.	Enhances internal coordination within an organization	Informing the public, decision makers, taxpayers, and other stakeholders about the effectiveness of government initiatives	Empirically document the deficiencies, or strengths, in plans and identify specific weaknesses that undermine implementation and plan effectiveness
Increases efficiencies and effectiveness of planning interventions	Demonstrate the effectiveness of the plans	Informs decision-makers whether, and how effectively, their projects, policies, processes and/or plans have achieved their intended goals and objectives.	Enhances the internal management of the organizations	Periodic exchange of outcomes from monitoring enhances trust and public engagement	Helps to build relevant indicators based on experience
Enhances the accountability of planners and other stakeholders involved in the plan preparation and implementation	Helps to enhance the quality of plans and plan preparation process	Checks the relevance of the indicators in place	Trains the staff and builds a culture of evaluation in planning organization	Enhances public participation and thus generate trust, credibility, and commitment to implementing plans.	Acts as a source of information and knowledge to examine prior strategies, obtain a clear sense of how existing or historical initiatives performed
Optimization of resource utilization	Increase the value and trust of public and other stakeholders in plans and planning processes		Builds confidence in the planners about their actions and outcomes	Effective communication to all the stakeholder and the public will reduce the political uncertainty	Extends institutional capacity
Improved decision making			Intra-Organizational		Enables planners to assess what constitutes good planning from bad planning
Enhances transparency of planning interventions			Generates evidence for upper level government to assess		Develops Research Design
Helps to realign the actions with the plans' goals and objectives, in case of deviation			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the appropriateness of interventions, quality of the intervention effectiveness of implementation 		Experience helps to identify appropriate research design and methods for different situations
			Checks the relevance and alignment of the plans and policies with government priorities		

Figure 2.4 Benefits of Evaluation in Planning

Figure 2.4 demonstrates that the benefits of monitoring and evaluation are not limited to the plans and plan implementation; monitoring and evaluation affects diverse but inter-connected aspects of the entire planning framework.

Plans

When practiced correctly and systematically, monitoring and evaluation offers an effective and pragmatic approach to study plans, prepare plans, and build causality between the plan goals/objectives and the outcomes (Krizek et al., 2009). This helps to enhance the perceived effectiveness of the plans from the perspective of stakeholders and decision-makers, thereby building their trust in plans and the planning process (Brody, 2003; Brody et al., 2003; Faehnle & Tyrväinen, 2013; Laurian & Shaw, 2009).

Regular monitoring and evaluation enhance both the quality of and clarity of the plan, which directly and indirectly enhances the effectiveness of the planning intervention by facilitating smoother implementation. As Laurian et al. (2004) and Stevens (2013) explain, systematic monitoring and evaluation will help keep track of the actions and short-term outcomes that eventually lead to desired end results. If misalignment between the plan and implementation actions is observed, monitoring and evaluation allows for informed realignment.

Planning Interventions

The previous section established that improved plans and improved planning interventions go hand-in-hand to some extent. Thus, a commitment to systematic monitoring and evaluation will improve planning interventions. Evidence-based and evaluation-guided implementation of planning actions will help achieve effective and efficient planning interventions and maintain the alignment of the planning interventions with the plans (Seasons, 2003). Further, monitoring and evaluation reduce the likelihood of error by closely examining planning actions, thereby holding planners, plan makers, plan implementers, and decision-makers accountable. Thus, monitoring and evaluation helps legitimize the field of planning, which is often criticized for being too costly, unable to achieve results, and of no use (Brody, 2003; Brody et al., 2003; Faehnle & Tyrväinen, 2013; Laurian & Shaw, 2009).

Builds Causality Seasons (2021, 117) defines causality as "the ability to identify links between plan goals and inputs and short- and long-term results." Causality is a subtle aspect of monitoring and evaluation, but nonetheless a very important one because it connects actions with intended goals or outcomes. Causality tells decision-makers whether the actions are in alignment with the intended goals or outcomes, and helps planning actors identify and understand the reasons behind achievement or deviation from the intended goals or outcomes (Brody, 2003; Brody et al., 2003). Causality observed over time also forms the foundation of the empirical knowledge database.

Inter-Organizational

Monitoring and evaluation demand internal coordination, improved management, and leadership within the planning organization (Cousins et al., 2014). Initially, the process will involve a learning curve for planners and the planning organization, but planners will ultimately gain valuable insight into the reasons behind the success or failure of a planning intervention.

Intra-Organizational

Evaluation sheds light on the relevance of plans and planning interventions relative to government priorities and initiatives (Chouinard, 2013). Thus, evaluation provides evidence about the appropriateness, quality, and effectiveness of interventions (Blalock, 1999; Vedung, 1997).

Communication

Communication represents another subtle aspect of monitoring and evaluation. Evaluation not only increases communication with stakeholders and the public, but also enhances accountability (Cousins et al., 2014). Monitoring and evaluation convey the progress of planning interventions relative to the intended or unintended outcomes, which helps stakeholders understand the impacts and effectiveness of planning interventions (Oliveira & Pinho, 2010a, 2011). This aspect of monitoring and evaluation is a fundamental part of building accountability (Leeuw & Furubo, 2008; Weiss et al., 2008).

Builds Empirical Database

Importantly, evaluation fosters continuous learning in planning, which not only promotes an assessment of plans but also supports constant improvement in the profession (Balsas, 2012; Oliveira & Pinho, 2010a, 2011). This continuous learning, developed over time, provides planners with an understanding of how to differentiate between good and bad planning (Baer, 1997).

Monitoring and evaluation document the strengths and weaknesses of different planning interventions including the specific actions that worked under certain circumstances, and the actions that did not. This documentation helps planners prepare more robust plans that guide effective implementation (Berke et al., 2012). As Weiss (1998) states, the lessons learned from monitoring and evaluation will help identify the research designs and research methodologies that work best for plan/policy preparation and the monitoring and evaluation of those plans and policies.

2.5.2 Need for Evaluation in Planning

The contemporary context for planning is characterized by uncertainty, complexity and turbulence. With limited resources and information in hand, planners' preference for the rational comprehensive model is understandable. As noted by Rittel and Webber (1973), who introduced the concept of wicked and messy problems, and de Roo and Porter (2008), who introduced the concept of fuzzy planning, turbulence in the field of planning has been and will be intense because of increasing uncertainty and complexity.

Seasons (2021) contends that the planner's affinity for a rational approach alone for decision-making will not help withstand and overcome complex issues. Seasons (2021) further identifies six forces of change: economic, demographic, socio-cultural, environmental, institutional-political, and technological as significant drivers of change in the future. Amid this complexity, demand for certainty has grown among decision-makers and stakeholders. Decision-makers need to know what is happening and why it is happening to make informed and appropriate decisions about the optimal use of public resources. The public also needs this information to guarantee their sustained support.

Communicating results to the public (whether the results are positive or negative) builds trust and fosters transparency. However, this is easier said than done. Monitoring and evaluation can provide information about what is happening and why while encouraging communication and documentation of successes and failures, all of which contribute to continuous learning and improvement (Seasons, 2021).

2.6 Challenges to Monitoring and Evaluation in Planning

Alexander (2006) notes that evaluation seems to have been underused in much of planning practice. This section identifies all the challenges that the literature has identified. Different challenges have different natures, but overall, there are two major types of challenges: one is tangible, and the other is intangible. Tangible challenges can be observed and studied, and solutions can be created with relative confidence. In contrast, intangible challenges deal with the softer and subtler aspects of planning interventions, for example, the attitude and mentality of the actors involved in the entire planning process, organizational cultural and political environment. This sub-section section will describe each challenge to monitoring and evaluation in planning, as depicted in Figure 2.5 Challenges to Effective Evaluation in Planning.

Evaluation – the underused and overlooked aspect of planning

According to Seasons & Guyadeen (2016), a gap exists between adopting plans and developing monitoring and evaluation. This not only holds true for regional and local municipalities but is also the case for the provincial government. Provincial plans such as Provincial Policy Statement (2005), the Greenbelt Plan (2005), and the Growth Plan for Greater Golden Horseshoe (2006) were enacted some years ago. However, it was not until 2014 that an evaluation strategy was formulated to understand the outcomes associated with these plans. This suggests a lack of importance given to the plan monitoring and evaluation.

Several major factors impede the effective realization of evaluation in planning. These include the availability of resources or the allocation of resources; lack of awareness amongst the current and the future planners about the importance of evaluation in planning; lack of experience and research on generally accepted evaluation methodologies (Brody & Highfield, 2005; Oliveira &

Pinho, 2011); and the absence of a learning and improvement mentality, along with inefficiencies and inexperience in handling the attitude of different stakeholders. Accordingly, a gap is visibly evident between plan visions, plan implementation and plan outcomes (Berke, Philip & Godschalk, 2009; Brody, 2003; Millard-Ball, 2012).

Strong adherence to plan preparation and ex-ante evaluation

Current evaluation practice in planning focuses more on plan preparation and less on plan implementation and plan outcomes. Well established, sound and rigorous methods are used to analyze the substitutes during plan preparation (Berke, Philip et al., 2006; Carmona & Sieh, 2005; Carmona & Sieh, 2008; Laurian et al., 2004; Laurian et al., 2010; Seasons, 2003). In contrast, when it comes to evaluation of plan implementation and plan outcomes, the plans rarely constitute the sections and detailed directions on them (Guyadeen, 2017; Seasons, 2003).

More focus on quantitative research methods

With the evolution of evaluation adjacent to the evolution of the rational comprehensive model, the early literature on plan evaluation recommended using elaborate, intensive and rigorous methods to conduct the monitoring and evaluation. However, as mentioned in the “Evolution of Monitoring and Evaluation” section, planners soon realized that these methods were difficult to manage under increasing responsibilities and resource constraints. Indeed, the reality is often that, as Simon (1957) stated, planners “satisfice” – that is, the planners will do their best in a given situation with available resources. However, the rational comprehensive model has an impact on evaluation practice. Where it does occur, a majority of monitoring and evaluation practice deals with measurable impacts and outcomes, neglecting the less tangible, subtler and qualitative side of evaluation.

Challenges to effective Evaluation in Planning – Part 1

Evaluation – the underused and overlooked aspect of planning	Poorly Developed Evaluation Methods	An Attribution Gap
Lack of awareness amongst current and future planners about the importance of outcome evaluations	Lack of pre-designed monitoring and evaluation methodology	Difficulty in identifying the individual impact of plans
Lack of generally accepted outcome evaluation methodologies	Lack of involvement of key stakeholders during the design of plan as well plan evaluation strategies, if any	The absence of control groups and quasi-experiment that identify the independent effects of plans (Unlike Program Evaluation)
Lack of resource allocation towards plan implementation and outcome evaluation (ex post)	There tends to be a lag between the adoption of plans and the development of monitoring and evaluation strategies.	Competing interpretations of goals of efficiency and effectiveness
A gap exists between plan intentions and plan implementations	Lack of pragmatic and realistic evaluation	Lack of empirical database and understanding
Inefficiency and inexperience in managing the competing interests of all the stakeholders	Plan Quality Issues	Lack of empirical evidence to help link plan goals and objectives with the outcomes
Strong adherence to plan preparation and ex ante evaluation	Poorly defined goals and a lack of connection between policies and plan	Lack of empirical understanding on selection of indicators (relates with plan quality)
Lack of implementation and outcome evaluations (ex post)	Lack of causal links between plan inputs, plan goals and objectives, and plan outputs and outcomes.	Lack of resources
More focus on quantitative research methods	Lack of clarity on the definitions of success and failure	Time Constraints
Pressure from the government to generate quantitative data subdues the qualitative aspect of evaluation	Lack of inclusion of plan monitoring and evaluation in the plan itself	Staff Capacity / Capacity of Planning Agencies
	Lack of inclusion of indicators to monitor and measure the progress on plan	Financial Resources (Availability vs. Allocation)
		Lack of provincial government mandate/guidance on plan/policy monitoring and evaluation

Same color coding depicts the inter-related chunks or clusters of challenges

Challenges to effective Evaluation in Planning – Part 2 (Continued)

Lack of Causality
Difficulty in generating cause-effect relationship between plans and materialized outcomes
Plan delivery is heavily reliant upon the actions of different actors, agencies, and other plans from across different sectors
Lack of alignment across horizontal and vertical agencies and their plans

Data Challenges
Lack of skilled professional to collect data in required and consistent fashion
Lack of continuous data collection
Access to appropriate data
Ambiguous rationale for selecting indicators
Difficulty and Complexity in measuring the planning goals

Institutional Hurdles
Lack of support from higher planning authorities
Dominant ways of doing things in an organization
Lack of recognition of the benefits of plan and planning evaluation
Lack of responsibility assignment (Evaluation Champion)
Lack of involvement of the entire planning staffs

Resistant Attitude
Lack of willingness to improve
Lack of risk tolerance
Resistant towards acceptance of failures
Fear of getting exposed against failures (Both ends political and planning)

Political Realities
Lack of Political Support
Difference in interests of the planning staff and the council
Elected officials have the power to make final decision

Stakeholder Management
Involvement of several stakeholders makes it difficult to manage
Lack of consensus amongst the key stakeholders
Managing divergent interests amongst the stakeholders

Lack of effective communication within, across organization as well with stakeholders
Absence of communication strategies that conveys the outcomes periodically

Same color coding depicts the inter-related chunks or clusters of challenges

Figure 2.5 Challenges to Effective Evaluation in Planning

Lack of resources

Every level of government must contend with resource constraints given the imbalance caused by increased demand and limited supply of public services (Pal, 1997). The situation of the municipal government is even worsened by the downward shifting of responsibilities from the higher level of government, cuts in the budget, and reorganization or amalgamation of municipalities (Graham et al., 1998; Siegel, 1993). As a result of this curtailment of resources and increased responsibilities, the municipalities witnessed staff reduction, reduced services, and poor morale (low morale as on “learning and improving” municipalities). This has weakened institutional creativity and the willingness to innovate.

Poorly developed evaluation methods, lack of causality, attribution gap, stakeholder management and plan quality

Given the complex web of all the interconnected challenges, it is difficult to derive a generally accepted monitoring and evaluation process. There is a lag between plan implementation and the adoption of monitoring and evaluation processes (Guyadeen & Seasons, 2016). This lag will impede the realization of sound evaluation methods. As a result, Seasons (2021) states that the monitoring and evaluation should be developed in conjunction with the plan's development.

Further, since the field of planning involves multiple stakeholders, and several departments horizontally and vertically in local government, it is difficult to gauge the impact that a plan can achieve (Carmona & Sieh, 2008; Mascarenhas et al., 2015). This inability to discern the impact of a plan amidst several actors and agencies is termed the “Attribution Gap” (Carmona & Sieh, 2008). As mentioned above, it can be a challenge to establish causality and manage the divergent, and at times, competing interests of different stakeholders, agencies, and other actors like politicians. Thus, one of the respondents said in Seasons’ (2003) study that success and failure are relative concepts in the field of planning - that is, success for one can be the failure for others and vice-versa. However, at least to start with, the planners can create clear, sound, interconnected, and holistic plans, as a plan high in quality has more potential to be implemented than one that is not.

Another important parameter that (Guyadeen, 2017) draws attention to is the lack of involvement of the Provincial government in monitoring and evaluation of adopted plans. (Guyadeen, 2017) states that Provincial government directions/guidance plays a significant role in adopting new change. Since the provincial government is silent when it comes to plan monitoring and evaluation in planning, the municipalities have the option (rarely accepted) to conduct the monitoring and evaluation. However, (Guyadeen, 2017) mentioned that further research is required to determine what level of intervention from the Provincial government will be beneficial.

Data challenges

When considering what might be considered sound evaluation methods, planners need to understand the purpose of the indicators, how will they measure the indicators and how will they run evaluation using the data collected (Laurian et al., 2010; Wong et al., 2006), and second, whether they prepared to collect continuous data of consistent quality. In the absence of appropriate data, the evaluation will not be possible, and the purpose of the entire process will be in vain.

Lack of empirical database and understanding

Another parameter that makes monitoring and evaluation effective is the extent of empirical evidence (Laurian et al., 2010). In the presence of sound empirical evidence, the monitoring and evaluation strategy/methodology design will have a higher possibility of establishing causality. Unfortunately, in contemporary conditions, this has proven elusive because of the underuse and lack of experience in the field of evaluation in planning, the absence of generally accepted evaluation methodologies, lack of support from senior administrations and politicians, and the lack of resources (Carmona & Sieh, 2005; Seasons, 2003). However, this should not be the reason to avoid evaluation in planning, but it should be the reason to embrace evaluation in planning, so in future, after few years (like the field of program evaluation), evaluation in planning will be backed by a solid legacy of empirical evidence.

Institutional hurdles and resistant attitude

One of the other major parameters that hamper the realization of evaluation in planning is institutional hurdles and a change resistant attitude. This can be considered an intangible factor for hindrance. Rigid organizational hierarchies and top-down management cultures can inhibit openness within the department to adapt to new changes (Kernaghan et al., 2000). The major drawback of this attitude is that it suffocates creativity, hampers the ability of others to speak, participate and collaborate (Poister & Streib, 1999).

Another important parameter is organizational culture, that is, is the organization “risk-averse” or does it have a “learning mentality”? The adoption of monitoring and evaluation starts with the awareness and acceptance of its significance and consequences. The institution’s culture should be such that they look forward to improving and excel, which further requires risk tolerance and a mentality to learn from failures (David & Ted, 1992; Peters, 1996). Only if the organizations have the right culture in place will they be willing to allocate resources towards the change, in this case, evaluation in planning.

Seasons (2003) found that most of the municipalities consider evaluation as discretionary and not necessary. There can be a bias to focus more on plan preparation than monitoring and evaluation (Waldner, 2004). Some organizations perceive evaluation to be lengthy and complicated, whereas others fear the possibility of errors being exposed in public (Seasons, 2003). Thus, the receptiveness of the organizations strongly influences the success or failure of evaluation in planning.

Political realities

As Laurian et al. (2010) state, since planning is a political endeavor that is directed by the final decision of the governing parties, the practice of neutral monitoring and evaluation at times gets challenging. Further, the politicians' underlying reason to resist evaluation is the fear of exposing their inadequacies in public. In contrast, planners fear being held responsible for these inadequacies. The findings from Seasons (2003) adds that at times the evaluation also becomes the target of political advantage, wherein politicians tamper the data to improve their public

standings. This misuse of evaluation reminds us of the need and obligation to design and manage effective monitoring and evaluation processes.

Lack of effective communication within and across organizations, as well, with stakeholders

The lack of regular communication of the actions and derived outcomes with regard to plan goals/objectives reduces the importance of plan and planning interventions. Seasons (2021) explains that regular, honest and neutral communication for all the outcomes to all the stakeholders will undoubtedly enhance stakeholders' trust and enhance the credibility of planning. Further, this will enhance the participation of the stakeholders and enhance the transparency of planning interventions for politicians and other senior administrators to respect.

Last but not least, many researchers tried to draw a line between the plans/policies goals or objectives and plan implementation/outcomes (Altes, 2006; Berke, Philip et al., 2006; Brody & Highfield, 2005; Brody et al., 2006; Laurian et al., 2004; Zhong et al., 2014). However, all of them concluded that there is an evident gap between what plan/policies states, what it implements, and finally, what the outcomes are.

2.7 Need to link Program Evaluation and Evaluation in Planning

As mentioned in the section of “Evolution of Monitoring and Evaluation,” planning scholars have laid efforts to link program evaluation with evaluation in planning (Alexander, E. R., 2006; Khakee, 2003; Laurian et al., 2010; Oliveira & Pinho, 2011). Witnessing the challenges mentioned in planning evaluation, planning scholars looked towards a well-developed field of program evaluation to improve planning evaluation. Again, these scholars have laid the foundations to link both theories (Oliveira and Pinho, 2011), but further research is required for smooth and effective integration (Guyadeen, 2017).

The commonalities between program evaluation and plan evaluation include similar design phases and timeline; the importance of establishing consensus amongst all the stakeholders; the need for optimization of the resource usage to derive the desired outcomes; the vision to provide credible, trustworthy, transparent and neutral information that helps the stakeholders and the

decision-makers make informed decisions (Oliveira and Pinho 2011; Seasons 2003); helps to legitimize the actions by enhancing the accountability of the decision-makers and practitioners (Chouinard 2013); use of appropriate research design and methods including qualitative, quantitative, and at times, mixed-method (triangulation) (McDavid and Hawthorn 2006; Seasons 2003).

Some lessons which the literature in planning evaluation has identified to learn from the field of program evaluation includes – development of the organizational and professional culture that respects and automatically integrates monitoring and evaluation at every stage of execution; development of the empirical database; enhancing the causality between the plan goals/objectives and outcomes (Brousselle & Champagne, 2011; Posavac Emil & Carey, 2007); establishing measurable goals/objectives that allows better monitoring and evaluation which in turns facilitates implementation and thus the outcomes (McDavid & Hawthorn, 2006); assignment of the responsibility to monitor and evaluation to an “evaluation champion” or as Seasons (2021) states, to establish team of “evaluation ambassadors”; and considering the realities of the organization and to prepare feasible and realist evaluation design (Newcomer & Triplett, 2004).

Other areas of influence include increasing the awareness and the education amongst the existing and future planners that can execute evaluation effectively; development of effective research design for evaluation that inculcates both quantitative and qualitative research methods as required (Caudle, 2004; Newcomer et al., 1994; Newcomer & Triplett, 2004); and finally, the design of an effective communication strategy that communicates the outcomes periodically and tailors reporting as per the interests of all the stakeholders with selection of appropriate mediums/platforms (Grob, 2004; Patton, 2008; Rossi et al., 1999).

2.8 Efforts to integrate Monitoring and Evaluation with the Plan Making Process

This section explores the researchers' and planners' efforts to integrate monitoring and evaluation with the plan-making process. The section then provides a brief explanation of a

systematic and integrative approach to integrating evaluation in planning with the plan-making process mentioned within Seasons' (2021) book.

Laurian et al. (2010) can be considered the first researcher who proposed the Plan-Outcome Evaluation (POE) methodology. POE method consists of three steps. In the first step, the evaluators establish the context and fundamental knowledge about the function of plan elements such as goals/objectives, targets/milestones, resource allocation, research methods and the indicators identified, and finally, the anticipated outcomes. In the second step, based on step 1, the monitored data is evaluated in resemblance with the anticipated goals. Finally, in the third step, the evaluators try to establish a correlation between the goals/objective, action/implementation and the outcomes by hunting for the appropriate reasoning. Further, upon applying this methodology, Laurian et al. (2010) found that the incapability of monitoring consistently and more focus on the administrative processes compared to the quality of development makes it utmost difficult to implement this method.

Oliveira and Pinho (2009, 2010b) developed the Plan-Process-Results (PPR) methodology. Under the method, nine criteria were used to evaluate the plans. The idea to apply this method is to check the plans in resemblance with all the nine pre-determined criteria. The author was successfully able to apply the method in the cities of Lisbon and Oporto, Portugal.

Chapin, Deyle, and Baker (2008) developed a parcel-based geographic information system (PBGIS). Under this method, the authors checked the extent of conformance between residential development patterns and hurricane zones. It was found that more and more development happened in the areas of high hurricane risk zones. Loh (2011) conducted a similar study and again found a high level of non-conformance between the development pattern and the zoning as designed by the plans and policies.

Thus, the researchers have started to integrate evaluation with practical planning, but the non-conformance between plan/policies and implementation, tendency to focus on performance, and lack of monitoring capability and experience made it utmost difficult to implement a robust evaluation in conjugation with plan preparation and implementation. Seasons (2021), in his book,

developed a holistic approach to integrating evaluation in planning from the start of the plan-making process. Seasons (2021) identified the step-by-step plan-making and evaluation design process. He provided guidance and suggestions about integrating both the process from the very start considering all the challenges and difficulties that might come along the way. Figure 2.6 Integrating Plan-Making Process and Evaluation in Planning illustrates the integration of both the processes: the plan-making process and the evaluation design process.

As shown in Figure 2.6 Integrating Plan-Making Process and Evaluation in Planning, Seasons breaks the plan-making process into the following segments:

1. Conception
2. Development
3. Consideration of Solutions
4. Developing Implementation Strategy
5. Development of Monitoring and Evaluation

Further, Seasons divides the last segment, “Development of Monitoring and Evaluation,” into the following parts:

- A. Establish evaluation purpose, participants, and management
- B. Develop evaluation design
- C. Finalizing evaluation process
- D. Robust and tactful communication strategy
- E. Reporting considerations
- F. Sustaining plan monitoring and evaluation

Finally, Seasons interrelates both the processes as illustrated visually in Figure 2.6 Integrating Plan-Making Process and Evaluation in Planning to showcase an example of how to integrate the plan-making process with the monitoring and evaluation process from the conception of the plan-making process itself.

The visual representation in Figure 2.6 Integrating Plan-Making Process and Evaluation in Planning is a well-integrated approach that inculcates all the dimensions of monitoring and evaluation. However, it is not the only way. On practical grounds, the process will be subject to considerable change and evolution based on the local parameters and the approach of the municipalities.

2.9 Understanding the link between Plan Quality and Evaluation in Planning

“How can a plan be high in quality”? OR “What is high-quality plan?”

Berke et al. (2006), Guyadeen (2017), Stevens (2013) and Seasons (2021) state that a high-quality plan is built on a strong fact base that identifies and explains the challenges faced by the communities; identify clear vision, goals, objectives and targets; provides interconnected and realistic direction/guidance for implementation of these goals/objectives; directions or guidance on monitoring and evaluating the plan outcomes to check the alignment of the outcomes and goals/objectives; and finally, instructions on the interventions required to realign plan goals/objectives and the outcomes.

Under the umbrella of evaluation in planning, plan quality evaluation or content analysis evolved in parallel. Plan quality evaluation deals with determining the quality of plans against some standards/parameters defined by the scholars. Plan quality can help to determine the competency of plans by determining whether the plan contains the major aspects and parameters of what the scholars considered as a high-quality plan.

On that note, scholars have tried to build the set of parameters that counts essential for the quality of plans since the 1990s (Kaiser et al., 1995). Initially, the parameters considered essential for plan quality were limited to clear goals and policies with a sound fact base. With further research on the topics, more parameters were added to the list of the high-quality plan as Lyles and Stevens (2014) based on their meta-analysis on plan quality states, planners have now developed a consensus about the parameters that constitute a high-quality plan. The parameters are as mentioned: fact base; goals; policies; implementation; monitoring and evaluation; inter-organizational coordination; public participation; plan organization and presentation; and

meeting legislative requirements (Berke, Philip et al., 2006; Berke, Philip & Godschalk, 2009; Lyles & Stevens, 2014; Stevens, 2013).

Guyadeen (2017) tried to understand the perspective of the planners on the different parameters of high-quality plans. He discovered that planners do not value all parameters equally. As per his findings, most of the planners considered the plans' goals, policies, and legislative requirements over monitoring and evaluation, participation, and inter-organizational coordination. Surprisingly, as high as one-third of the planners of his sample size indicated that the plans do not include monitoring and evaluation and inter-organizational coordination altogether. This really is an important finding from the perspective of monitoring and evaluation in planning.

Further, researchers cannot draw a straight line or generate direct correlation between the quality of plan and level of implementation and outcomes, and this aspect needs further research and investigation (Berke, Philip et al., 2012; Berke, Philip et al., 2013; Brody, 2003; Brody et al., 2003; Edwards & Haines, 2007; Lyles & Stevens, 2014). So, it cannot be said that a plan high in quality ensures that plan implementation will be as good, and vice versa. However, a high quality plan for sure can set the proper base on which effective implementation can bolster (Baer, 1997; Berke, Philip & Godschalk, 2009).

2.10 Need for further Research on Plan Quality in terms of Monitoring and Evaluation

Guyadeen (2017) surveyed planners about their perspective on high plan quality parameters, and also conducted content analysis on 63 Official Plans across the Greater Golden Horseshoe Area in Southern Ontario. The results from both the parts of his study reached the same conclusion – on one hand, planners do not consider monitoring and evaluation as important as other parameters; and on the other hand, the content analysis portrayed that the plans analyzed performed poor under the principle of plan monitoring and evaluation.

In his study, Guyadeen (2017) analyzed only the Official Plans using all the principals identified above. So, the study further asks to explore the cumulative quality of the plans for a municipality by analyzing the secondary plans, as well. With the focus on the aspect of plan monitoring and evaluation, it was determined that the literature further needs to explore, understand, and

determine the quality of plans (both official and secondary plans) from the sole perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation. Exploration and comprehension call for a qualitative approach, whereas the determination of the quality needs a quantitative study, that is, using the content analysis tool. Thus, it was determined to adopt a mixed method approach for the research to explore, understand and determine the stance of plan quality in terms of monitoring and evaluation.

2.11 Plan Quality Conceptual Framework as identified in Guyadeen (2017) Study

Figure 2.7 depicts the entire plan quality conceptual framework along with the indicators from Guyadeen (2017) study. Guyadeen studied the quality of all the Official Plans in Ontario municipalities. In his study, Guyadeen identified the principles and the parameters to measure the plan quality of the Official Plans. It should be noted that the principles/parameters mentioned below in have been gradually developed by several studies on the quality of the plan (Berke, Philip et al., 2006; Berke, Philip & Godschalk, 2009; Lyles & Stevens, 2014; Stevens, 2013). Guyadeen (2017) applied the same principles/parameters by further identifying appropriate indicators in the context of Ontario's planning framework.

2.12 Identification of High Plan Quality Parameters (factors) for Monitoring and Evaluation

After identifying ideal plan monitoring and evaluation process, and high plan quality parameters in the previous sections, this section churns and synthesizes the parameters deemed important from the perspective of monitoring and evaluation. The presence (or absence) of these parameters will help determine the competencies of the plans in terms of monitoring and evaluation, which is indeed the intent of this research. Figure 3.1 lists, and Table 2.1 and Table 2.2 explains these parameters (factor) in-depth with the parameter (factor) question, relevance (justification) of the parameter (factor) and the consequence of the absence of these parameters (factors) within the plans.

Plan Quality Conceptual Framework		
Fact Base	Goals/Objectives and Policies	Implementation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current Population - Future Population - Current Population Composition - Future Population Composition - Current Economy - Future Economy - Existing Land Uses - Current Land Supply for Future - Existing Community Facilities - Future Need for Community Facilities - Existing Road Infrastructure - Future Need for Road Infrastructure - Existing Sewer and Water Infrastructure - Future Need for Sewer and Water Infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Air Quality - Natural Heritage - Water Bodies - Constraints to Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tables & Data Sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Land Use and Growth Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing - Transportation - Waste Management - Sewer and Wastewater - Energy Supply - Natural Heritage, Park and Open Space <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Water (Drinking, Groundwater, Source water) - Agriculture & Food - Cultural Heritage - Mineral Aggregates - Natural & Human-Made Hazards - Economic Development (includes Employment Lands) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation Section <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plan Priority - Organization Responsibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Timelines - Funding Sources
	Monitoring and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitoring and Evaluation Section - Organizational Responsibility - Timeline for Plan Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indicators - Quantifiable Goals
	Public Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stakeholders - Purpose of Participation - Public Participation Techniques - Effects on Citizens
	Inter-organizational Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Horizontal Coordination - Vertical Coordination
	Legislative Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Intensification Target - Schedule 3 and 7 population and employment projections - Density Targets
	Organization and Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Executive Summary - Cross-Referencing Table of Contents - Glossary of Terms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Illustrations - Maps

Figure 2.7 Plan Quality Conceptual Framework with Indicators

The development of these parameters (factors) covers all the important aspects of the plan monitoring and evaluation process. The determination of plan quality under these parameters will help understand the current state of plans from the lenses of plan monitoring and evaluation (Brody, 2003; Lyles & Stevens, 2014; Stevens, 2013).

It should be noted that these parameters (factors) are utilized for conducting the quantitative segment of this research, but the processing of literature involved in identifying these parameters (factors) laid the foundation for the qualitative scrutinization of the plans as well.

It is important to note that “parameter” as a term has a different context in the field of highly quantitative research design. However, in this research, parameter is comprehended as the factors or elements of importance whose presence or absence in the plans will help to determine the quality of the plans in terms of monitoring and evaluation. Guyadeen (2017) has also followed the same terminology in his study, as a result just to follow with the same form of terminology “parameter” as a term is used all throughout this research. Substitute terminology for the “parameter“ can be “factors” or “characteristics.”

Table 2.1 High-Quality Plan Parameters for Monitoring and Evaluation Explained

Sr No	Parameters (Factors)	Explanation		Citations
High-Quality Plan Monitoring and Evaluation Parameters for Plans				
1	Prioritized Goals/Policies	Parameter question	Have the plan policies identified priorities and given directions/guidance to direct the implementation actions?	(Guyadeen, 2017; Hall, 2013; Seasons, 2021; Shipley, 2002; Stevens, 2013)
		Relevance of parameter	The presence of directions/priorities within the policies guides or directs the implementation actions. The clearer and precise the policies, the better will be the implacability.	
		Consequence of absence	If the policies are vague with no priorities identified, it will leave the room open for subjective identification and might hamper the effectiveness of implementation action.	
2	Measurable Goals/Policies	Parameter question	Are the policies drafted in a manner that can be measured or tracked?	(Berke, Philip et al., 2006; Orr, 2010; Patton, 2004; Ryan, 2011; Seasons, 2003)
		Relevance of parameter	The measurable or trackable policies help to monitor the way actions are happening. It binds the policies with time which helps to measure the progress. However, it is different from policies with targets, as, in the case of policies with targets, it is the quantum of work that needs to be achieved in a given time.	

Sr No	Parameters (Factors)	Explanation		Citations
		Consequence of absence	If the plan policies are not measurable or trackable, it does not bind time with the policies. As a result, the actions cannot be realized with increased efficiency.	
3	Targets and/or milestones	Parameter question	Have the policies set up targets, and have they identified the timeline or milestones to achieve those targets?	(Berke, Philip et al., 2006; Patton, 2004; Seasons, 2003; Stevens, 2013)
		Relevance of parameter	The policies that identify targets bound the actions by both time and quantum of work. In such a case, there is no other option left other than enhancing the efficacy of the implementation to meet up the targets.	
		Consequence of absence	The absence of the targets with a timeline or milestone provides the room to implement the policies with leisure and not discipline.	
4	Linking goals/policies with monitoring/evaluation	Parameter question	Are the policies drafted to connect them with the monitoring and evaluation framework identified, if any?	(Berke, Philip R. & Conroy, 2000; Guyadeen, 2017; Loh, 2011; Seasons, 2003; Seasons, 2021; Smith, 2013)
		Relevance of parameter	The policies that link the action policies with monitoring and evaluation act like a bridge that clarifies how the policies are to be monitored.	
		Consequence of absence	The absence of the link that connects the policies with the monitoring and evaluation framework will retard the clarity about the monitoring process when compared to the case with these links identified.	
5	Directions to monitor/evaluate	Parameter question	Do the plan policies give directions on monitoring and evaluating the diverse aspects of the planning policy framework?	(Berke, Philip et al., 2006; Laurian & Shaw, 2009; Patton, 2004; Posavac, 2015; Seasons, 2021; Smith, 2013)
		Relevance of parameter	The directions to monitor and evaluate the policies in a plan includes specific directions to monitor these diverse sets of policies. This will not only increase the possibility of monitoring and evaluation but also will enhance the	

Sr No	Parameters (Factors)	Explanation		Citations
			homogeneity and efficacy of plan monitoring and evaluation.	
		Consequence of absence	The absence of directions to monitor and evaluate the policies will leave the policies open to interpretation for how they should be monitored and result in unnecessary discrepancies.	
6	Referring other plans	Parameter question	Has the plan policies referred to other plans, studies, strategies, action plans, and departmental studies?	(Ryan, 2011; Seasons, 2003; Seasons, 2021; Stevens, 2013)
		Relevance of parameter	Planning is a field that works with several plans functioning at the same time. And, the plans need to correlate the policies with all the plans that affect each other. This will increase the cohesion amongst the plans, increase the clarity for implementation and reduce the room for overlaps and/or conflicts amongst different plans.	
		Consequence of absence	The absence of policies that connects with other plans and policies will make the policy framework complex. As well, it will not only reduce the clarity to interpret the plans simultaneously but can also overlap and/or create conflicting policies.	
7	Delegation of monitoring/evaluation	Parameter question	Has the plan policies delegated the task to monitor and evaluate to other plans and/or departments?	(Seasons, 2003; Seasons,

Sr No	Parameters (Factors)	Explanation		Citations
		Relevance of parameter	The higher-level plans tend to delegate the task to monitor and evaluate to lower-level plans. As a result, the homogenous system for monitoring and evaluation is unable to exist. The delegation should happen in a manner wherein all the plans have their stack of monitoring and evaluation and then only for cohesion should other plans be referred.	2021; Shipley, 2002; Stevens, 2013)
		Consequence of presence	If the higher-level plans like the Official Plan just delegate the task to monitor/evaluate and do not include a monitoring framework in itself, it will create an uneven system of monitoring and evaluation. It can also happen that the monitoring and evaluation process in itself is absent because of the delegation of the task.	
8	Mention of Indicators	Parameter question	Have the plan policies acknowledged or identified the indicators to measure/track the progress on actions?	(Berke, Philip et al., 2006; Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016; Seasons, 2021; Stevens, 2013)
		Relevance of parameter	Suitable, precise and relevant indicator forms the basis of monitoring and evaluation. Indicators form a base for collecting data, which is then monitored and evaluated to derive results. These derived results help to gauge the progress and make informed decisions that maintain both the performance and conformance of the plan policies with their objectives, goals, or targets	
		Consequence of absence	The absence of appropriate indicators will hamper the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation because their absence will not clarify the data collection, which is the basis for monitoring and evaluation.	
9	Directions to prepare Indicators	Parameter question	Do the plan policies either prepare indicators or give directions on preparing the indicators to be monitored and evaluated?	(Berke, Philip et al., 2006; Loh, 2011; Markiewicz &

Sr No	Parameters (Factors)	Explanation		Citations
		Relevance of parameter	The directions to prepare appropriate and relevant indicators in the plan policies are important to ensure that the monitoring and evaluation are carried out consistently and homogeneously over the entire tenure of plan implementation.	Patrick, 2016; Stevens, 2013)
		Consequence of absence	If proper directions are not given on the preparation of the indicators, then the homogeneity of monitoring and evaluation amongst both the individual plans and the different plans will not be maintained. And to reap the best fruit out of the evaluation process, the indicators must be monitored consistently over a longer time.	
10	Classification of indicators (Stakeholder Focused Indicators)	Parameter question	Does the plan policies classify or identifies the indicators from the perspective of different stakeholder?	(Berke, Philip et al., 2006; Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016; Seasons, 2021; Stevens, 2013)
		Relevance of parameter	Planning is a field of multipled stakeholders, each involved with a different set of interests. Identifying the indicators from the perspective of all the stakeholders will help all the stakeholders make improved decision-making and draw the trust of all the stakeholders into the evaluation process.	
		Consequence of absence	The absence of the indicators from the perspective of all the stakeholders might not interest all the stakeholders. As a result, the process can be at the risk of being useful to a limited set of stakeholders, affecting the longevity and acceptance of the process itself.	
11	Section for Implementation	Parameter question	Does the plan contain a separate section for the implementation of plan policies?	(Berke, Philip et al., 2006; Guyadeen,

Sr No	Parameters (Factors)	Explanation		Citations
		Relevance of parameter	A separate section designated exclusively to explain and club up the implementation policies helps to comprehend the plan expectation better and thus facilitate smooth implementation. Further, the implementation section also explains how the planning tools can be used to achieve the desired results.	2017; Stevens, 2013)
		Consequence of absence	The absence of an implementation section might hamper the clarity of planning and implementing what is expected.	
12	Section for Monitoring/Evaluation	Parameter question	Does the plan contain a separate section for monitoring and evaluation of plan policies?	(Berke, Philip et al., 2006; Guyadeen, 2017; Orr, 2010; Ryan, 2011; Seasons, 2003; Stevens, 2013)
		Relevance of parameter	A separate section for monitoring and evaluation completes the framework for monitoring and evaluation. It helps to connect all the individual policies for monitoring and evaluation across the plan under one framework. It also provides necessary directions to execute, maintain and update the monitoring and evaluation process.	
		Consequence of absence	The absence of this section can drastically reduce the efficacy of the monitoring and evaluation process. As the directions required to link all the individual plan policies under one framework of monitoring and evaluation cannot be provided without this section. All the necessary information that can help sustain the monitoring and evaluation process cannot be provided without this section.	
13	Objectives of monitoring/evaluation	Parameter question	Has the plan identified objectives of monitoring and evaluation?	(Lichfield, D., 2006; Patton, 2004;

Sr No	Parameters (Factors)	Explanation		Citations
		Relevance of parameter	A robust monitoring and evaluation framework can only be created with clarity about monitoring and evaluation and what is expected out of the process.	Posavac, 2015; Robson, 2017)
		Consequence of absence	In the absence of clear objectives, the monitoring and evaluation process will be directionless, leading to some random monitoring and evaluation that can or cannot lead to desired outcomes (with optimized efficiency).	
14	Research Questions	Parameter question	Has the plan identified research questions that should be answered by monitoring and evaluation process?	(Patton, 2004; Robson, 2017; Seasons, 2003; Seasons, 2021)
		Relevance of parameter	Research questions identify exactly what the monitoring and evaluation process is trying to monitor and evaluate. And, based on that entire research design with appropriate research methods (indicators) will be developed to collect and analyze the data to answer these research questions.	
		Consequence of absence	If the research questions are not established, it is difficult to prepare the research design and identify accurate research methods (indicators) to answer the research questions.	
15	Research Design with Research Methods	Parameter question	Has the plan developed a research design with appropriate research methods?	(Hall, 2013; Patton, 2004; Robson, 2017; Seasons, 2003; Seasons, 2021)
		Relevance of parameter	Research design is the platform on which monitoring and evaluation will be conducted by identifying the research methods to answer the research questions. The data will be collected (either qualitative or quantitative) and analyzed to derive the desired outcomes based on the research design. This is the stage when the study will identify appropriate indicators as a part of the research design.	

Sr No	Parameters (Factors)	Explanation		Citations
		Consequence of absence	The absence of research design with appropriate research methods is like conducting monitoring and evaluation without knowing what exactly is being monitored and evaluated.	
16	Qualitative Approach/Methods	Parameter question	Are there any plan policies that identify or integrate the qualitative aspect of monitoring and evaluation?	(Guyadeen, 2017; Seasons, 2003; Seasons, 2021; Stevens, 2013)
Relevance of parameter	The qualitative aspect of monitoring and evaluation is equally important as the quantitative aspect. However, in the run to measure the plans' performance, the planners have developed a tendency to monitor the quantitative aspect neglecting the qualitative. The qualitative aspect forms the link between actions and results by portraying the practical realities/consequences of the actions, which the quantitative aspect will not capture.			
Consequence of absence	Every action has several implications that can either hinder or facilitate the implementation of plan policies. And quantitative aspect alone will not be able to understand these on-ground implications. As a result, the qualitative aspect of research is equally important to understand these practical implications.			
17	Evaluation Champion/Team	Parameter question	Has the plan identified a team or an evaluation champion responsible for conducting systematic monitoring and evaluation?	(Hall, 2013; Seasons, 2003; Seasons, 2021; Stevens, 2013)
Relevance of parameter	Assigning the responsibility of monitoring and evaluation to an evaluation champion or a team is like making someone responsible and answerable to execute the process. It will not only help the systematic functioning of the process but will also increase the importance of monitoring and evaluation across all the departments.			

Sr No	Parameters (Factors)	Explanation		Citations
		Consequence of absence	If the responsibility of monitoring and evaluation is not assigned to an individual or a team, it can dilute the possibility of systematic execution of monitoring and evaluation and the consideration of the process as important amongst all the stakeholders.	
18	Resource allocation for Plan Monitoring/Evaluation	Parameter question	Has the plan allocated any resources towards monitoring and evaluation of the planning interventions?	(Laurian & Shaw, 2009; Seasons, 2003; Seasons, 2021; Stevens, 2013)
Relevance of parameter	This parameter runs in parallel with assigning the responsibility to monitor and evaluate to an evaluation champion. Allocating the resources to monitor and evaluate increases the possibility for the execution of the process. As the resources have already been assigned and hence the actions are required to justify the resources.			
Consequence of absence	If resources are not allocated to monitor and evaluate then, it will make the process look subsidiary. And looking at the monitoring and evaluation as a subsidiary process affects the attitude of staff and relevant stakeholders. If the staff doesn't feel that the monitoring and evaluation are important, they won't execute monitoring and evaluation.			
19	Frequency of monitoring/evaluation	Parameter question	Has the plan identified any frequencies for monitoring and evaluation?	(Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016; Posavac, 2015; Ryan, 2011)
Relevance of parameter	Identifying the frequency to monitor and then to evaluate is a crucial component of the monitoring and evaluation framework. Specifying the frequencies within the plan facilitates periodic, consistent, and regular monitoring and evaluation over the entire tenure of the plan.			

Sr No	Parameters (Factors)	Explanation		Citations
		Consequence of absence	If the frequencies to monitor and evaluate are not specified within the plan, it makes the monitoring and evaluation process vulnerable to inconsistent data collection with inconsistent frequencies to monitor and evaluate.	
20	Communication Strategy	Parameter question	Is there any communication strategy within the plan policies that convey the evaluation outcomes periodically to all the stakeholders?	(Berke, Philip et al., 2006; Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016; Siegel, 2010)
		Relevance of parameter	Having conducted monitoring and evaluation is undoubtedly an important milestone to achieve. However, communicating the outcomes derived from the process is equally important. Without periodic and regular communication of the outcomes in the form as desired by different stakeholders, it won't be easy to maintain the trust of all the stakeholders in the process.	
		Consequence of absence	Communication strategy is like the presentation of the outcomes in the form that interests the stakeholders. It is like paying off all the hard work needed to monitor and evaluate the planning interventions consistently. Thus, the absence of the section shall affect the acceptance of the process by all the stakeholders ubiquitously.	

Table 2.2 High-Quality Report Parameters for Monitoring and Evaluation Explained

Sr No	Parameters (Factors)	Explanation		Citations
High-Quality Plan Monitoring and Evaluation Parameters for Reports				
1	Linking with plans	Parameter question	Does the report connect with the plan/s for which it has been prepared?	(Berke, Philip R. & Conroy,

Sr No	Parameters (Factors)	Explanation		Citations
		Relevance of parameter	It is important for the report to successfully connect with the plan or plans under which it is being prepared for and include all the aspects of plan monitoring and evaluation asked by their respective plans to conduct/execute.	2000; Guyadeen, 2017; Loh, 2011; Seasons, 2003; Seasons, 2021; Smith, 2013)
		Consequence of absence	If the reports do not connect with their respective plans properly and systematically, then the entire hierarchy of plan monitoring and evaluation from plans to report will be disturbed. And it will get difficult to derive strong conclusions and recommendations from the reports for the plans to improve.	
2	Directions/Details on Monitoring and Evaluation	Parameter question	Has the report provided the purpose and clarified what exactly is being monitored and evaluated by providing sufficient details and/or directions?	(Berke, Philip et al., 2006; Loh, 2011; Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016; Stevens, 2013)
		Relevance of parameter	To start with, the reports must connect with plans for which they have been prepared. It is then important for the reports to identify and describe the monitoring and evaluation framework/approach adopted. Finally, details on what is being monitored and the intent behind monitoring are equally important to provide.	
		Consequence of absence	If the report is not clear on the fundamentals of the monitoring and evaluation approach adopted and lacks the details on the aspects being monitored, then the reports are not helping to connect with the web of the entire plan monitoring and evaluation framework. So, the report is not completely serving its purpose.	

Sr No	Parameters (Factors)	Explanation		Citations
3	Connects to Research Question / Identify Research Questions	Parameter question	Has the report connected with the Research Questions identified in their plan? OR Has the report formed research questions based on the guidance/direction provided from their plan?	(Patton, 2004; Robson, 2017; Seasons, 2003; Seasons, 2021)
		Relevance of parameter	It is important for the reports to either connect with the research question or form the research questions, whatever is the case. Connecting or identifying the research question clarifies what the report is trying to answer, conclude and recommend. The research question is the stepping stone to establish a robust plan monitoring and evaluation research design with relevant research questions.	
		Consequence of absence	If a report neither connects with nor forms the research questions, then the report will not accurately identify the need, scope, and expectations out of itself. And if the report lacks clarity on its intent, then the resulting conclusions and recommendations that the reports generated will be unclear and less reliable. Thus, the entire purpose of the report itself is distorted.	
4	Research Design with Research Methods	Parameter question	Same as parameter 15 for plans	(Hall, 2013; Patton, 2004; Robson, 2017; Seasons, 2003; Seasons, 2021)
		Relevance of parameter		
		Consequence of absence		
5	Qualitative Approach/Methods	Parameter question	Same as parameter 16 for plans	(Guyadeen, 2017; Seasons, 2003; Seasons,
		Relevance of parameter		

Sr No	Parameters (Factors)	Explanation		Citations
		Consequence of absence		2021; Stevens, 2013)
6	Generation of Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations from Research	Parameter question	Has the report derived clear and precise findings and conclusions out of the monitoring and evaluation exercise? And are strong recommendations or remedial actions to align the actions and desired outcomes provided in the reports?	(Guyadeen, 2017; Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016; Seasons, 2003; Seasons, 2021; Stevens, 2013)
		Relevance of parameter	This step can be considered as the purpose behind conducting the entire exercise of the plan and report monitoring and evaluation. So, it is crucial to derive accurate findings and conclude from that findings so that strong recommendations can be provided to ensure that the actions are in alignment with the desired outcomes.	
		Consequence of absence	The absence of clear findings, conclusions, and recommendations will not serve the purpose of the plan monitoring and evaluation exercise. It is like conducting monitoring and evaluation exercises without understanding why the exercise is being carried out.	
7	Communication Strategy (Tailored content for the audience)	Parameter question	Same as parameter 20 for plans	(Berke, Philip et al., 2006; Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016; Siegel, 2010)
		Relevance of parameter		
		Consequence of absence		

2.13 Chapter Snapshot and Research Justification

This chapter has built the base for this research by providing overall details on plan monitoring and evaluation. This includes the inception of the concept, the definitions, the different types, the difference between the plan evaluation and program evaluation, understanding the importance of monitoring and evaluation by acknowledging the benefits and the challenges, the need to link plan monitoring with program evaluation, understanding the link between plan quality and the aspect of monitoring and evaluation, identifying the efforts from the researches to integrate plan monitoring and evaluation with the plan-making process, and finally, identification of the high-quality parameters (factors) within a plan from the perspective of monitoring and evaluation.

So, at this point it is clear that plan monitoring and evaluation is an under-studied aspect of planning canon, and it needs further studies to explore, understand, determine and overcome the low to no application of this tool in planning. There are several studies on the topic, and one theme that has emerged out is that of plan quality. Up till this point in time, all the studies conducted on the plan quality are generic in nature with focus on all the principle that translates into a high-quality plan. So, the need for this research, that is, a focused study on plan quality only from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation is vital.

To understand the concept better, and from the recommendations of other researchers (Guyadeen, 2017; Seasons, 2021), this study adopted a mixed methods approach to explore and understand the quality of plans in terms of plan monitoring and evaluation, along with conducting the content analysis study to determine the quality of plans. Further, the research is not limited to only Official Plans like the previous study. Secondary plans (housing and strategic plans) and their reports are also analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively along with the Official Plan.

2.14 Chapter Summary

In summary, Chapter 2 builds the foundation on which the research was conducted. The chapter introduces, defines, and explains the entire process on plan monitoring and evaluation. The chapter then identifies the best practices and integrates and explain the plan monitoring and evaluation in terms of plan quality. Integrating the ideal practices and the basic framework for the high-plan quality parameters (factors), exclusive parameters (factors) for plans and reports are identified as a final outcome of the literature review. Using these parameters (factors), the entire exercise of content analysis is conducted to derive the results from this study.

3 Research Design and Methodology

This chapter introduces the research questions and explains the formulation of research design to identify relevant research methods. The chapter then briefly reflects the plan quality framework, especially in terms of monitoring and evaluation, plus a short review on how the plan monitoring and evaluation parameters (factors) were identified and applied. The chapter also provides discussion and justification on the selected region of the study (the sample of study) with a description of the plan policies framework practiced in the respective region of study.

The chapter then provides a visual representation of the research design and an in-depth explanation of how the research methods were identified and incorporated within the established framework. Under the research methods, the chapter explains the procedure of data collection, coding protocol, measures to maintain the homogeneity of scoring and the analytical techniques applied. Finally, the chapter ends with an explanation of the challenges encountered and limitations of the study.

3.1 Developing the Research Approach

3.1.1 Scrutinizing Types of Research Approach

3.1.1.1 *Definitions*

3.1.1.2 *Philosophical Worldviews, Research Design and Research Methods*

Developing a research approach involves identification for three fundamental components: Philosophical Worldviews, Research Design and Research Methods (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). As per Creswell, four major types of philosophical worldviews (paradigms) exist, namely, post positivism, constructivism, transformative, and pragmatism.

Post-positivism is the most traditional philosophy which deals with proving or disproving a hypothesis with the use of analytical and quantitative research design (Phillips & Burbules, 2000). Constructivism, on the other hand, entails an enquiry to understand the complex phenomenon. It involves close scrutinization of the research topic with the use of qualitative research design

tools that involves close inquiries of the subjects under research (Crotty & Crotty, 1998; Mertens, 2014). Transformative approach envisions a change for the betterment of the marginalized population. It tries to intervene the research inquiry with a social agenda that needs transformation (Mertens, 2014). Pragmatism does not stick specifically to a single philosophy group. It is a tailor-made approach that integrates the strengths of both the quantitative and qualitative approach. It facilitates the researcher to optimize the research findings by selecting the components that fits best for the research questions identified (Morgan, 2007; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010).

Further, there are three types of research designs: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods Design (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Quantitative Research Design is further bifurcated into two major segments – survey research and experimental research. Survey research uses surveys on sample population to determine the trends, attitudes, or opinion of the population (Fowler Jr, 2013), whereas experimental research deals with determination of the implication of certain experiments. This is achieved by collecting, analyzing, and comparing the data both before and after the experiment (Keppel, 1991).

Table 3.1 provides basic characteristics of the three most commonly used research approaches.

Table 3.1 Three commonly used research approaches

Qualitative Research: *“It is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem.”*

Quantitative Research: *“It is an approach for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables.”*

Mixed Methods Research: *“It is an approach to inquiry involving collecting both quantitative and qualitative data, integrating the two forms of data, and using distinct designs that may involve philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks.” (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p.3)*

Qualitative Research Design breaks down into following segments – Narrative Research, Phenomenological Research, Grounded Theory, Ethnography, and Case Studies (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Narrative research, as the name implies, involves narration of the stories by the individuals which is then transcribed and analyzed to generate findings (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Phenomenological research involves analysis of a particular phenomenon by interviewing the individuals how underwent the targeted phenomenon (Giorgi, 2009; Moustakas, 1994). Grounded theory, in contrast, focuses on identification of a theory for targeted process, action, or interaction grounded on the observation of the participants (Corbin & Strauss, 2014). Ethnography deals with observation and scrutinization of set of behaviors, trends, or actions by the sample under study over a long period of time (Fetterman, 2019; Wolcott, 2008). Case studies, finally, involves an in-depth and focused study and analysis of an individual program or process under research (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009; Yin, 2011).

Mixed Methods Research Designs are of three types – Convergent, Explanatory sequential, and Exploratory Sequential. These types are straightforward, convergent involves both the qualitative and quantitative aspects of research design to run simultaneously. Explanatory sequential involves applying the quantitative analysis first and qualitative second to understand the trends or patterns derived from the quantitative aspect. In contrast, explorative sequential involves conducting qualitative aspect first and quantitative approach second (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Under each category of the research methods different tools to collect and analyze the data are made available, depending on the research question and consecutive research design the research methods are to be selected to answer the research questions in the best possible way (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

3.1.2 Selection of Appropriate Research Approach

As Creswell and Creswell (2018) states, selection of appropriate research design primarily depends on the research questions derived from the problem identification and research gap.

So, this research identifies a problem that planners lack on plan monitoring and evaluation as a component of the planning process (Seasons, 2003). Upon the review of the literature, it was found that researchers have conducted studies to determine the quality of the plans from generic perspective. However, it was observed that the literature lacks a study that comprehends the quality of the plans from the perspective of monitoring and evaluation. As a result, with consideration of available resources and time, I decided to explore, understand, and determine the quality of the existing plans from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation.

So, with the clarity in mind to explore, understand and determine the quality of plans from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation, research questions were formalized. Further, based on the research questions it was determined to adopt a mixed method approach for the thesis. As the first objective of the research is to explore and understand the quality of the plans from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation which will include the qualitative aspect. The second objective of the research is to determine the quality of the plan in terms of monitoring and evaluation which will include quantitative aspect. Thus, the research adopted the pragmatic philosophy that is flexible and not limited to any one end of the research spectrum.

Further, to address second objective it was decided to conduct content analysis of both the plans and their reports. The research goes one step forward not only by selecting the Official Plan, but also the housing plans and the strategic plans. It was determined that selecting more than one plans will provide a room to internally compare and contrast the plans from the lenses of monitoring and evaluation.

In summary, based on the above-mentioned decisions, the study uses a mixed methods approach with pragmatic philosophy using the convergent mixed method research design with the qualitative scrutinization of the plans and reports as the qualitative aspect, and the content analysis as the quantitative aspect of the research both running in parallel (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

3.2 Research Questions

The literature review clearly portrays the importance of the plan monitoring and evaluation process and the benefits that the process has to grant. Clearly, if done properly, plan monitoring and evaluation facilitates the implementation of the policies within the plans to bring the desired outcome that these plans envision for the community as a whole.

In order to conduct the research, the following research questions were developed:

3.2.1 Primary Research Questions

- What is the current state of plan quantity from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation for the major upper-tier and single-tier municipalities in Ontario?
- Are there similarities (or differences) between the quality of the Official Plans and other plans (housing plans and strategic plans) from the perspective of monitoring and evaluation within Ontario's major upper-tier and single-tier municipalities?

The identification of the research questions then helped to fine tune the approach of this research. I concluded that to improve the process of plan monitoring and evaluation, it is necessary to understand the current state of the plan quality. The research underwent rigorous literature review to derive the parameters (factors) that deem important from perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation. I completed a qualitative analysis of the plans and reports to explore and understand the current state of plan quality in terms of monitoring and evaluation. Finally, the research conducted the content analysis using the parameters (factors) derived to determine the quality of the plans in terms of plan monitoring and evaluation.

3.3 Overview of Major Upper-tier and Single-tier Municipalities in Ontario

This research covers the first fifteen upper-tier and single-tier municipalities population-wise within Ontario as the sample. As per the 2016 census, the population of Canada was 35.15 million, with Ontario alone contributing 13.45 million, which is 38.26 percent (one-third

approximately) of the entire national population. Of the 13.45 million people in Ontario, 9.71 million people live within these first fifteen populated upper-tier and single-tier municipalities in Ontario. The study has considered all the major and few mid-sized upper-tier and single-tier municipalities in the sample. As Stevens (2013) stated, highly populated municipalities must have high-quality plans. These municipalities will lead the growth and development of a huge quantum of the population, which will act as a role model for all the other municipalities across Canada to improve upon the plan quality.

Section 2.4, *“Understanding the Planning System and Policy Framework in Ontario,”* explains the entire planning framework practiced in Ontario. On the same note, all these municipalities under study are subject to the same planning framework, which is also a reason for only selecting the municipalities within Ontario for this study.

3.4 Plan Policies Structural Framework

Section 2.4, *“Understanding the Planning System and Policy Framework in Ontario,”* explains the entire planning hierarchy practiced in Ontario. Under the hierarchy, there are several plans prepared under the Official Plan like the secondary plans, master plans, state of reports, monitoring and evaluation reports of one form or other. Given the time constraint and limited capacity to analyze a huge quantum of plans, only a segment of the plans from the entire planning framework has been analyzed for the municipalities under study.

The parameters (factors) identified to analyze plans are designed to be applied to both the higher-level and the lower-level plans within the planning hierarchy. It should also be noted that the scope of this research is for the upper-tier and single-tier municipalities, so the study will not consider the provincial acts, plans and policies for analysis. Three plans are considered for analysis from the entire planning framework:

- Official Plan – as the primary guiding plan for the municipalities
- Housing Plans – Housing Service Act (2011) has made it mandatory for all the municipalities to prepare a ten-year housing and homelessness action plan. The reason behind the selection of housing plan is that the Housing Service Act (2011) gives direction

to these plans to include an assessment of future and current housing needs, identify objectives, set up action items, set-up targets, and provide explanation, strategies and methods on how to measure the progress. Further, it also directs to prepare a five-year comprehensive review and annual progress report. Thus, the selection of the housing plans will help to see if the provincial legislation on the housing plans has any implication on the quality of the plan from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation. Another added advantage is that given the provincial mandate, all the municipalities are subject to preparing these housing reports, making it feasible to collect homogenous reports across all the municipalities.

- Strategic Plans – this section contains the strategic plans prepared by the Council to prioritize their actions for their given tenure. The reason for selecting the strategic action plans is that these plans have political will and interests twined within. This will help see if there is any implication of this political will on the plan quality, especially from the perspective of monitoring and evaluation.

3.5 High Plan Quality Parameters (factors) for Monitoring and Evaluation

As discussed in *Section 2.12, "Identification of High Plan Quality Parameters (factors) for Monitoring and Evaluation,"* that the parameters/principles identified in Table 2.1 are developed from the integration of all the plan quality principles/parameters and the ideal process of monitoring and evaluation as identified by the researches so far. Table 2.1 identifies and explains all the parameters/principles deemed important and whose presence (or absence) in the plan reflects the quality of the plan from the perspective of monitoring and evaluation.

In the first place, a parameter (factor) question is asked to the plan under review. The answer to this parameter (factor) question will determine the presence (or absence) of the respective parameter within the plans under review. Secondly, based on the rigorous literature review, each parameter (factor) is accompanied by the justification. Finally, the consequence of the absence of these parameters (factors) on the quality of the plan in terms of monitoring and evaluation is mentioned.

High Plan Quality Parameters for Monitoring and Evaluation	
Overall Plan Quality in correspondence with Plan Monitoring and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prioritized Goals and Policies - Measurable Goals and Policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Targets and/or Milestones - Linking goals/policies with monitoring/evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Directions to monitor/evaluate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Referring other plans - Delegation of monitoring and evaluation
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mention of Indicators - Directions to prepare Indicators - Classification of Indicators (Stakeholder Focused)
Monitoring and Evaluation Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Section for Implementation - Section for Monitoring/Evaluation - Objectives of Monitoring/Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research Questions - Research Design with Research Methods - Inclusion of Qualitative Approach/Methods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluation Champion/Team - Resource allocation for Plan Monitoring/Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Frequency of Monitoring/Evaluation - Communication Strategy
High-Quality Report Parameters for Monitoring and Evaluation	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Linking with Plans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Directions/Details on Monitoring and Evaluation - Connects to Research Question / Identify Research Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research Design with Research Methods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mixed-methods Approach/Methods - Generations of Findings, Conclusion, and Recommendations from Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Robust Communication Strategy

Figure 3.1 High Plan Quality Parameters for Monitoring and Evaluation

This study has identified twenty high-quality plan parameters (factors) for plans and seven high-quality parameters (factors) for their reports. It is important to note that after applying all the parameters (factors), it was observed that three parameters (factors) for plans did not produce

any results, so those parameters (factors) were removed from the analysis. Further detail on the three parameters (factors) is provided in the “Research Limitations” and “Results and Discussions” sections.

Figure 3.1 identified below provides a quick snapshot of all the parameters (factors) for plans and reports identified as an output from the literature review.

3.6 Research Approach

The research has adopted a mixed method approach clubbed with the content analysis. Under the qualitative aspect, the research closely reviews plans and reports of the municipalities' understudy from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation. The qualitative study derived the thematic patterns that are prevalent in all the plans and reports analyzed. Content analysis is a systematic process of coding the parameters (factors) deemed important within a plan to determine the quality of plans in terms of monitoring and evaluation (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). To break down the process of content analysis, it involves:

- Identification of important principles/parameters for which the content analysis is conducted
- Establishing a coding protocol for the identified parameters – coding protocol can also involve weighted coding based on the relative importance or correlation of different parameters with each other
- Setting up a scoring scheme for the identified parameters – the most basic form of the scoring scheme involves binary coding, that is, either 0 or 1. However, based on different aspects of the parameters, a different set of scoring schemes can be established.
- Application of the coding protocols developed to all the plans under the study to understand the presence (or absence) or the extent of presence (or absence) of the parameters under the content analysis (Lyles & Stevens, 2014).

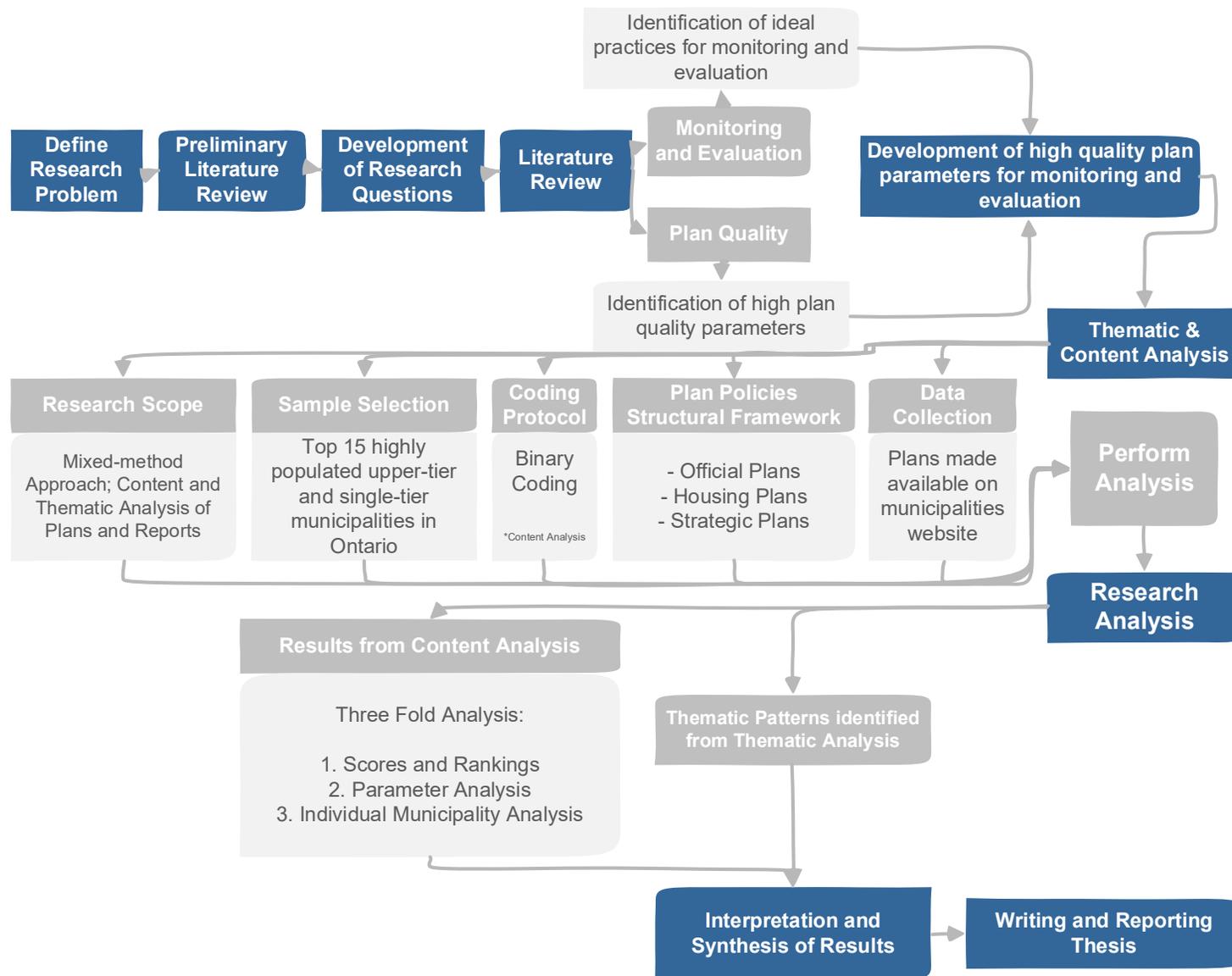


Figure 3.2 Research Design Flowchart

3.6.1 Research Design and Methods Flowchart

Figure 3.2 depicts the entire research design along with the research methods to conduct this study.

3.6.2 Sample and Data Collection

This study has undertaken plans and reports from the top 15 highly populated upper-tier and single-tier municipalities in Ontario as the sample. As mentioned before, more than one plan has been examined for each of these municipalities under study. This includes 45 plans, with 15 each of Official Plans, housing plans, and strategic plans. Most of the plans were available on each municipality's website, while others were downloaded from the archives, and the municipalities' Council minutes and agendas portal.

The prime reason behind the selection of only the top 15 highly populated municipalities in Ontario is to include the secondary plans (housing plans and strategic plans) and their respective reports. In addition, as Stevens (2014) states, big sized municipalities bear higher responsibility to be efficient and optimal, as these are the municipalities that are in charge of larger chunk of population and are the role model for other smaller municipalities. As a result, the top 15 highly populated municipalities in Ontario covers close to one-fourth of entire Canada's population and about one-third of entire Ontario's population.

The study has reviewed 31 reports. It should be noted that since different municipalities have different ways to prepare and present the reports, all the reports in conjunction with the plans were not available. Some municipalities provided the reports on the websites, others provided reports on Council meetings and agenda, while some reports were for internal purposes. Thus, the reports are not classified under the three segments of Official Plans, strategic plans and housing plans given the lack of availability of all the reports. The reports were content analyzed to gain a sense of the extent of presence (or absence) of the parameters (factors) deemed important for reports from perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation, and direct correlation between the results of plans and reports cannot be made.

In addition, under the qualitative review of the plans, several additional plans were reviewed for understanding the planning framework and its impact on plan monitoring and evaluation. Appendix 1 Sample Plans and Reports Under Study has mentioned all these plans and reports examined under the study with necessary classification.

The total population for the sample comes out to be 9,711,989, with an average of 647,466. The maximum population in the sample is 2,731,571 in the City of Toronto, and the minimum population for the sample is 59,297 in the County of Huron. In the case of the year of adoption (consolidation for Official Plans), the average year for all the 45 plans cumulatively comes out to be 2018, whereas for Official Plans the average is 2016, for the strategic plans it is 2018, and for the housing plans it is 2019.

Further, as mentioned above, all these plans were content analyzed with the parameters (factors) identified in Section 3.5, *“High Plan Quality Parameters (factors) for Monitoring and Evaluation.”* Although the parameters (factors) were uniquely identified to conduct the study from the perspective of monitoring and evaluation, the process of content analysis was consistent with and followed previous research designs (i.e., content analysis) concerning plan quality (Baker et al., 2012; Brody et al., 2003; Brody, 2003; Horney, Jennifer et al., 2017; Horney, Jennifer A. et al., 2012; Norton, 2008; Saunders et al., 2015). This, as per Stevens (2013), served to conduct meta-analysis or cross-study comparisons. The findings will complement and extend previous research consensus on plan quality.

3.6.3 The Qualitative Component of Research

Under the qualitative component of this research, the study has focused on understanding the dynamics of the policy framework for each municipality qualitatively. All the plans and reports have been closely analyzed from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation. In addition to the 45 plans reviewed with content, several other plans were analyzed to enhance the understanding of the planning framework within which the plan monitoring and evaluation is being conducted.

Several themes emerged out of the qualitative analysis of the plans. These thematic patterns observed are synthesized in the final chapter, “Synthesis, Conclusion and Recommendation.”

3.6.4 The Quantitative Component of Research

The main objective of carrying out this qualitative segment is to determine the present quality of the plans in terms of plan monitoring and evaluation. The content analysis model is adopted from Guyadeen’s (2017) study. There are several adaptations as mentioned below:

Diversified Sample Size: In this study, Guyadeen (2017) has only selected the Official Plans. However, this study intends to also include the secondary plans (housing and strategic plans) in addition to the Official Plans.

Parameters (factors) are identified exclusively from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation: Guyadeen (2017) in his study has identified several principles and under each principle he has identified several parameters (factors). However, since this study intends to only look at the quality of the plans from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation, the study has only identified the parameters (factors) under one principle, that is, plan monitoring and evaluation.

It should be noted that the prime intent of this exercise is to identify and supplement patterns and trends found by the thematic analysis of the plans. So, the exercise has no intention to derive any statistical inferences, unlike Guyadeen’s (2017) study.

Thus, the results derived out of this study can only be validated internally, that is, limited to the Official Plans and other secondary plans in the context of planning framework of Ontario. The results cannot be validated externally as quite rigorous studies will be required to validate the results externally, which is beyond the scope of this research.

3.6.4.1 Coding Protocol

The plan quality evaluation protocol for monitoring and evaluation is primarily built on the work done by Guyadeen (2017). Other studies from which Guyadeen (2017) research was evolved

were also consulted to get further insights on identification of appropriate coding protocol for this research (Berke, Philip et al., 2006; Stevens, 2013). Although Guyadeen's (2017) research has identified the plan quality by considering all the principles, this study has focused only on the monitoring and evaluation component. Thus, the study has incorporated the parameters (factors) on monitoring and evaluation from Guyadeen (2017) research and additionally has identified other parameters that make the monitoring and evaluation complete, as mentioned in Table 2.1.

All the parameters (factors) were analyzed using the binary scale, unlike Guyadeen's (2017) research, where both the binary scale and ordinal scale were utilized for different plan quality principles. The binary scale is a scale of "0" and "1", whereas the ordinal scale is a scale that goes beyond "0" and "1", that is, "2", "3", "4" and so on. However, generally in the case of plan quality research, it is sufficient to use a three-level ordinal scale, that is, "0", "1" and "2", which is the case with Guyadeen (2017) research for some parameters (factors). In this study, "0" denotes the absence of a parameter, and "1" denotes the presence of a parameter within the plan under review.

Another important aspect to note about the coding protocol is that it can provide weighted importance to one parameter over another, since there are some standards that reveal the correlation between the parameters. Equal weight was given to all the parameters (factors) (Guyadeen, 2017). Since this study is the first of its type to identify the parameters from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation, to have correlation between these parameters (factors) is beyond the scope of the study and needs further investigation.

3.6.4.2 Analytical Techniques

Since the research deals with more than one plan for an individual municipality, it has provided an opportunity to expand the analysis beyond the scoring protocol and ranking. The review of more than one plan for the same municipality provides room to compare the plans internally. The study has also analyzed the parameters (factors) individually to understand the state of all the parameters. Thus, the study conducts analysis in three folds as mentioned below:

1. Scoring and Ranking
2. Individual Municipality-wise Analysis
3. Parameter-wise Analysis

3.6.4.2.1 Scoring Protocol and Ranking

This study is consistent with past studies' approaches to calculate scores and ranks (Berke, Philip & Godschalk, 2009; Guyadeen, 2017; Horney, Jennifer et al., 2017). Since this study involved more than one plan for a municipality, the scores and ranks were calculated for all the possible plans, as mentioned below:

- Official Plans
- Housing Plans
- Strategic Plans
- All the plans

However, the method of calculation of the scores and the rank remains the same as used in other, comparable research:

- Summation of the values of all the parameters (factors) for the respective municipality for which the scores are being calculated
- Division of this summation by the maximum possible score, which is 16 for plans and 7 for reports
- Multiplication of the fraction obtained with 10 to get the scores in the range of 1 to 10
- The highest score for a specific plan (or all the plans) will be ranked first and the lowest score as last. All the municipalities with the same score will be ranked the same.

So, this analysis generated four matrices with scores and ranks, one for each plan and one for all the plans. In the case of reports, the analysis only generated one matrix with total scores for all the reports cumulatively—the reason being the unavailability of all the reports across all the municipality. It should also be noted that the reports have not been ranked by municipality, as

the intent was only to understand the presence (or absence) of the parameters (factors) deemed important for the reports.

It should be noted that of all the seventeen parameters (factors) for the plans, one parameter, that is, “Delegation of monitoring/evaluation” works negatively, as in the presence of this parameters (factors) reduces the quality of plans in terms of monitoring and evaluation. So, the scores are calculated from a maximum possible score of 16 in the denominator, and the actual score for the respective plan with considering “Delegation of monitoring/evaluation” as “- 1”.

Lastly, since the coding protocol is limited to binary scale, i.e., “0” or “1” the scores calculated are same as the cumulative percentage or proportion of the parameters (factors) present or absent for all the municipalities under study.

3.6.4.2.2 Parameter-based Analysis

In the case of this parameter-based analysis, the analysis was conducted by keeping the parameters at the center. All the 17 parameters (factors) of high plan quality for monitoring and evaluation are focused individually from different lenses, that is, from the perspective of Official Plans, Housing Plans, Strategic Plans and the total percentage lines of all the plans.

The analysis includes calculating percentages for each of the 17 high-quality plan parameters (factors) across 45 plans and the 7 high-quality report parameters (factors) across 31 reports. The percentage for 15 Official Plans, strategic plans and housing plans each are portrayed with the total percentage of all the 45 plans to understand the variance within the parameters (factors) amongst different plans. In the reports, since homogenous data were not available, the simple percentage calculation for all the 31 reports was carried out.

3.6.4.2.3 Individual Municipality-based Analysis

The individual municipality-based analysis has the charts of the percentage of all the parameters (factors) for each municipality, accompanied by a table stating the ranks and scores for each plan for all the municipalities. This portrays the standing of each municipality in terms of monitoring and evaluation, by internally comparing the results generated as an outcome of content analysis

for all the three types of the plans, that is, the Official Plans, the housing plans, and the strategic plans. Specifically, the chart compares the percentages of the Official Plan, housing plan and strategic plan for each municipality with the total percentages of all the municipalities.

3.6.5 Research Limitations

As Krippendorff (2013) and Stevens et al. (2014) state, the absence of intercoder reliability is a challenge. In the case of single-coded studies, one coder is involved, so it is not possible to replicate the content analysis based on the same coding protocol with two mutually exclusive coders. The idea is that if two mutually exclusive coders perform the same analysis, then the frequency at which the codes of both the coders match helps determine the reliability of the content analysis.

As per Neuendorf (2002) and Krippendorff (2013), this lack of reliability can be moderated if clear, in-depth and detailed directions on the coding protocol adopted and the analysis performed are provided. On the same note, Chapter 3, *“Research Design and Methodology,”* provides the in-depth direction of all the aspects of the coding protocol and the type of analysis conducted. Furthermore, the study has maintained how past research has conducted the content analysis on a scoring scale of 0-10. Although the study has introduced new parameters (factors) on monitoring and evaluation, the content analysis was conducted in the same manner as past research. As a result, the replicability and reliability of the study are maintained in accordance with these past studies.

Another challenge that content analysis encounters is the lack of studies that find a correlation between the plan's quality and its ability to drive the implementation. Presently, it cannot be inferred that high-quality plan equal to a high level of implementation. A simple reason for the lack of such correlational studies, as Seasons & Guyadeen (2016) state, is the number of variables and the complex systems within which planning is practiced.

Another challenge that this study encountered specifically is that of the 20 parameters (factors) identified on the plan monitoring and evaluation study, content analysis was able to generate results on 17 parameters only. Three parameters (factors) - classification of indicators from the

stakeholder's perspective, identification of evaluation champion/team and allocation of resources for monitoring and evaluation - hardly generated any results. It was difficult to locate the evaluation champion/team and allocation of the resources towards monitoring and evaluation within the plans under review. Many of the plans do not designate the responsibility and resources to perform monitoring and evaluation within the plans themselves. Some plans do, while the majority do this internally within the departments or during the Council and staff meetings. So, the inclusion of these parameters (factors) in the content analysis did not generate any results, so these three parameters (factors) were discarded from the content analysis exercise.

Availability of the plans and reports for this study was a challenge. Unlike the studies exclusively on the Official Plan or on a single plan, in this study, since more than one plan was involved, it was difficult to get the plans and/or reports of the same hierarchy across all the municipalities. The reasons for these could include the different ways each municipality prepares and operates under the planning framework, the difference in competencies and areas of focus for each municipality, the size and geography of the municipalities, the organizational culture and attitude of the departments, how municipalities publish the plan and reports (i.e., some just update the secondary plans or reports internally for the Council meeting), whereas others publish them on the corporate website.

As mentioned before, some plans and reports within the planning framework were not included in the content analysis. Instead, only a portion of the entire planning framework was studied. This is because if all the reports for an individual municipality were to be considered, it would have increased the number of plans and reports to be content analyzed by two to three folds (compared to this study). And, given the limited availability of time and resources, it would have exceeded the scope of this research. However, such studies can be conducted on a case study basis where the research scope can be made limited to one or two municipalities for in-depth research on the entire planning framework across the entire hierarchy.

Lastly, based on the approach and methodology of this study, the study cannot be validated externally. However, the study stands at par in terms of internal validation and reliability (Drost,

2011; Golafshani, 2003). Meaning, the results generated out from this study cannot be generalized for entire Canada or internationally. However, the results stand strong in the context of planning framework practiced within Ontario.

3.7 Chapter Summary

Chapter 3 “Research Design and Methodology” has provided detailed information on the mixed-method approach that this study adopted. The chapter further provides details on the Research Design, refer Figure 3.2, and the research methods adopted to conduct the study. Lastly, all the methods are explained in detail along with explanation on how these methods were executed in this study. The chapter then concludes with Research Limitations.

4 Results and Discussion

This chapter entails the outcomes generated by this research both in the form of qualitative outcomes generated by the close examination of all the plans and reports under review and the results generated as the outcome from the content analysis exercise. The chapter primarily deals with portraying the results derived by the analysis, and the final chapter synthesizes the results to reach final conclusions and recommendations.

The chapter is divided into two major segments. The first segment portrays the thematic patterns that emerged out of the qualitative segment of this study. The second segment is further divided into three segments portraying the results derived from the content analysis. The first segment portrays the overall results generated from the content analysis exercise performed on the plans and reports. It provides scores and ranks to all the municipalities based on the overall performance of the plans. This section provides the scores and ranks for Official Plans, housing plans and strategic plans exclusively, and for all the plans cumulatively. The second section provides details on the performance of all the parameters (factors) identified for the plans and reports.

The final section contains comparative analysis in the form of charts prepared exclusively for each municipality. The chart compares the results of the Official Plan, housing plan and strategic plan with the percentages of the respective municipality and the cumulative percentage of all the 15 municipalities.

4.1 Thematic Trends and Patterns derived from Qualitative Analysis

Appendix 6 Municipality-wise Qualitative Observations for all the Plans and Reports under review – contains in-depth observations and discussions emerged as an outcome of the rigorous plan qualitative analysis from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation. The entire qualitative analysis and synthesis is derived from the observations generated from the qualitative scrutinization of the plans and reports. All the plans and reports mentioned in Appendix 1 Sample Plans and Reports Under Study, irrespective of whether those are content analyzed, are analyzed

qualitatively. This section enlists the key thematic patterns observed as an output of the qualitative segment of this research, and the thematic patterns are further synthesized in “Chapter 5 Synthesis, Conclusion and Recommendation”.

Summary of Key Findings:

In general, measurable policies with identified targets, timelines, and milestones were missing in the plans studied. Further, the policies in these plans lacked connections or links with the monitoring and evaluation process. Indeed, in the majority of cases, the framework for plan monitoring and evaluation itself absent. In addition, the majority of the plans and reports lacked proper directions on how monitoring and evaluation should be conducted. Here, I noted that connections between the reports associated with the plans, and the plans themselves, were missing. In the absence of monitoring and evaluation protocols, the municipalities were unable to assess consistency between these documents.

I found that many plans talked about identifying indicators. However, only a handful of plans identified indicators and analyzed plan implementation in accordance with those indicators. None of the plans classified the indicators from the perspective of usability and different interest-groups’ perspectives. The majority of the plans and reports had dedicated sections for monitoring and evaluation. However, the majority of all the plans simply described the benefits of monitoring and evaluation and expressed the intent to develop a plan monitoring and evaluation protocol. However, there were very few cases when municipalities followed through with these aspirations on conducting monitoring and evaluation.

It is considered a best practice to clearly explain how a plan is to be evaluated. This would include details about the evaluation process, research design, and evaluation questions. However, only three municipalities mentioned the need to prepare preparing research questions. Very few municipalities created a research design with identified research methods either in their plans or reports. The rest of the municipalities delegated the task to monitor and evaluate to other plans or reports, again, as a future task. Only the Region of York mentioned using a qualitative approach in their plan.

The majority of plans explained the frequency of monitoring and evaluation (e.g., annually, in five-year increments). However, the explanation of frequency was not a part of the plan's monitoring and evaluation framework. Rather, it was presented as an obligation in corporate policy or as a provincial directive. A handful of plans and reports recognized the need to develop a communications strategy to share evaluation results with plan stakeholders. Several reports explained the changes that had taken place over time but did not make the important connection that should exist between evaluation findings, and their application to proposed plan revisions. As well, not a single municipality provided a mechanism in their plans to check and maintain the conformity of the evaluation reports created.

Policies on monitoring and evaluation were not drafted during the plan-making process. In most cases, the development of a monitoring and evaluation process was considered a future task. This is problematic because plan monitoring and evaluation needs to be included in the plans as they are crafted, rather than treated as an afterthought.

I found that no municipality developed a timeline, that is, established targets with milestones developed in accordance with the visions, objectives, goals, and targets of the plans and/or reports. Here, I noted that there was a lack of coordination of plan milestones with monitoring and evaluation milestones. As a result, proposed revisions to the plans would not be informed by the evidence generated by an effective plan monitoring and evaluation process. Interestingly, provincial directives regarding plan monitoring and evaluation were recognized by the municipalities. Accordingly, it seems that the provincial government can play a very important role in encouraging and building plan monitoring and evaluation capacity in municipal government.

The next sub-section depicts the results derived from the statistical analysis (content analysis) of the plans and reports. As mentioned before, the first part portrays the scores and ranks for each municipality. The scores are generated by providing "1" point for each parameter present and "0" point for the parameters absent. Then for each municipality the summation of the total points is divided by the total possible points and then multiplied by 10 to get the scores in the range of 0 to 10. Finally, the ranks are derived as from the scores.

In the next part portrays the results from the perspective of each parameter both for the plans and the reports. Finally, the last part provides the same analysis but from the perspective of the municipalities.

4.2 Results derived from the Content Analysis Exercise

4.2.1 Scoring and Ranking the Municipalities for the quality of plans in terms of monitoring and evaluation

Table 4.1 depicts the scores for all the municipalities, and Table 4.2 depicts the ranks for all the municipalities. In both cases, exclusive scores and ranks for Official Plans, housing plans and strategic plans are depicted in the tables.

As mentioned in Table 4.1, the scores for Official Plans vary from a high of 7.50 to a low of 1.88 out of 10. City of Toronto and Region of York ranked first by scoring 7.50, and the County of Huron scored the lowest of 1.88. In the case of housing plans, the range of the score varies from a high of 7.50 to a low of 3.13, with the Region of Waterloo on the top and County of Huron on the bottom. The strategic plan has 8.75 as the highest score for the Region of York and 0.63 as the lowest score for the County of Norfolk.

Finally, in the case of all the plans, Region of York ranked first with a high of 7.50 and Region of Durham ranked the last with a low of 2.29. It should be noted that since more than one municipality scoring the same are clubbed, the total ranks for all four categories are different.

Table 4.1 Scoring for the Municipalities

Sr No	Municipalities	Official Plans Score	Municipalities	Housing Plans Score	Municipalities	Strategic Plans Score	Municipalities	All the Plans Score
1	City of Toronto	7.50	Region of Waterloo	7.50	Region of York	8.75	Region of York	7.50
2	Region of York	7.50	City of Toronto	6.88	City of Hamilton	6.25	Region of Waterloo	6.04
3	Region of Peel	6.88	City of Greater Sudbury	6.88	Region of Waterloo	6.25	Region of Halton	5.83
4	Region of Halton	6.25	County of Norfolk	6.88	Region of Halton	5.00	City of Hamilton	5.83

Sr No	Municipalities	Official Plans Score	Municipalities	Housing Plans Score	Municipalities	Strategic Plans Score	Municipalities	All the Plans Score
5	City of London	5.63	Region of York	6.25	County of Huron	5.00	City of Toronto	5.42
6	DM of Muskoka	5.63	Region of Halton	6.25	Region of Peel	4.38	Region of Peel	5.21
7	City of Hamilton	5.00	City of Hamilton	6.25	Region of Niagara	3.75	Region of Niagara	4.38
8	Region of Niagara	5.00	City of London	5.63	County of Oxford	2.50	City of London	4.38
9	County of Norfolk	5.00	County of Oxford	5.63	DM of Muskoka	2.50	County of Norfolk	4.17
10	Region of Waterloo	4.38	City of Ottawa	5.00	City of Toronto	1.88	DM of Muskoka	4.17
11	City of Ottawa	3.75	Region of Peel	4.38	City of London	1.88	County of Oxford	3.96
12	County of Oxford	3.75	Region of Niagara	4.38	City of Ottawa	1.25	City of Greater Sudbury	3.54
13	Region of Durham	3.13	DM of Muskoka	4.38	City of Greater Sudbury	1.25	City of Ottawa	3.33
14	City of Greater Sudbury	2.50	Region of Durham	3.13	Region of Durham	0.63	County of Huron	3.33
15	County of Huron	1.88	County of Huron	3.13	County of Norfolk	0.63	Region of Durham	2.29

Table 4.2 Ranking for Municipalities

Ranks	Official Plans Score	Housing Plans Score	Strategic Plans Score	All the Plans Score
1.00	City of Toronto Region of York	Region of Waterloo	Region of York	Region of York
2.00	Region of Peel	City of Toronto City of Greater Sudbury County of Norfolk	City of Hamilton Region of Waterloo	Region of Waterloo
3.00	Region of Halton	Region of York Region of Halton City of Hamilton	Region of Halton County of Huron	Region of Halton City of Hamilton

Ranks	Official Plans Score	Housing Plans Score	Strategic Plans Score	All the Plans Score
4.00	City of London	City of London County of Oxford	Region of Peel	City of Toronto
5.00	DM of Muskoka	City of Ottawa	Region of Niagara	Region of Peel
6.00	City of Hamilton Region of Niagara County of Norfolk	Region of Peel Region of Niagara DM of Muskoka	County of Oxford DM of Muskoka	Region of Niagara City of London
7.00	Region of Waterloo	Region of Durham County of Huron	City of Toronto City of London	County of Norfolk DM of Muskoka
8.00	City of Ottawa County of Oxford	N/A	City of Ottawa City of Greater Sudbury	County of Oxford
9.00	Region of Durham	N/A	Region of Durham County of Norfolk	City of Greater Sudbury
10.00	City of Greater Sudbury	N/A	N/A	City of Ottawa County of Huron
11.00	County of Huron	N/A	N/A	Region of Durham

4.2.2 Parameter (factor) Analysis

This section is further divided into two segments. The first depicts the results generated by the content analysis of the plans, and the second depicts the results for reports.

4.2.2.1 Results for Plans

Figure 4.1 Overall High Plan Quality Parameter Chart across all the Municipalities demonstrates the overall results generated by the content analysis of all the 45 plans. The red line depicts the percentage of all the 15 Official Plans, the blue line depicts the percentage of all the 15 housing

plans, the grey line depicts the percentage of all the 15 strategic plans, and the sky-blue area underneath depicts the percentage of all the 45 plans (15 each of the Official Plans, housing plans and the strategic plans).

It is clearly visible in Figure 4.1 that, mostly for all the parameters (factors), the strategic plan is below the total percentage line. In contrast, the Official Plans and the housing plans are above the total percentage line for all the 45 plans. This means that from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation, the Official Plans and the housing plans performed better compared with strategic plans for the 15 municipalities under examination. Close observation of the results derived under the Official Plans and the housing plans is provided in Table 5.1 Comparison between Official Plans and Housing Plans Score Parameter-wise in the final chapter.

Figure 4.2, Figure 4.3 and Figure 4.4 depict the results for all the parameters (factors) with the same classification used to bifurcate the parameters (factors). Figure 4.2 depicts the results for the high plan quality parameters under the classification of the “Overall plan quality in terms of monitoring and evaluation.” Figure 4.3 does that under the classification of the “Indicators,” and Figure 4.4 does that under the classification of the “Plan monitoring and evaluation process breakdown.”

As mentioned above, all the charts below depict the results for the Official Plans, housing plans and strategic plans exclusively, and for all the plans cumulatively to understand the variance among all the plans and the percentages of all the plans.

As per Figure 4.2, the prioritized goals/policies percentages at 0.98 with a little variance amongst all three sets of the plans. The measurable goals/policies percentages at 0.56, with the Official Plan at 0.67 and the housing plans at 0.73. In contrast, the strategic plan performed a low of 0.27, dragging the entire average of the parameter down. This means that roughly half of all the plans have drafted the goals/policies in a manner that can be measured; the rest have drafted vague goals/policies.

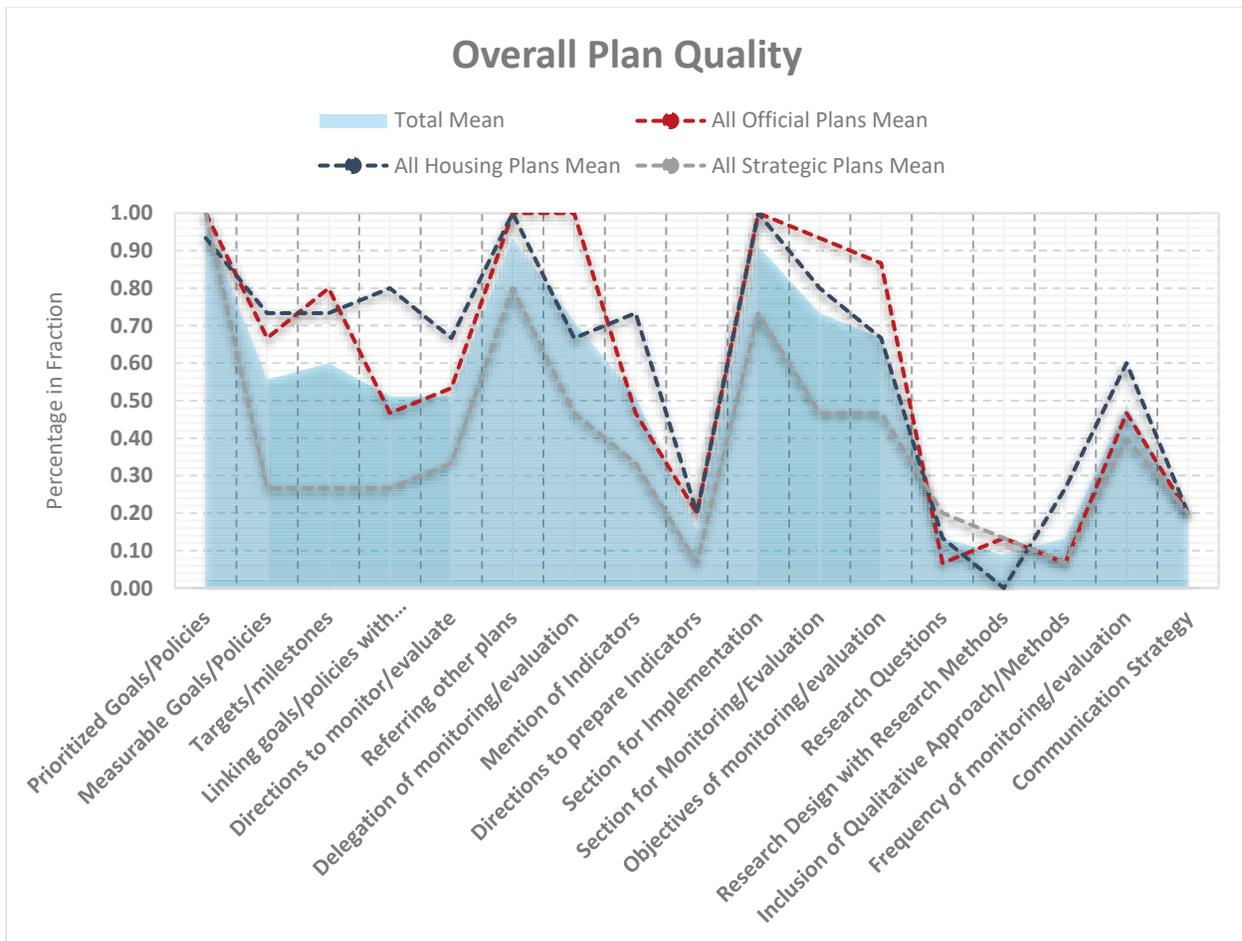


Figure 4.1 Overall High Plan Quality Parameter Chart across all the Municipalities

Under the targets/milestones, the percentage of all the plans is 0.60, with the Official Plans at 0.80 and the housing plans at 0.73. Again, the strategic plan performed low as compared to official and housing plans with a percentage of just 0.27. It was observed that a high result for the Official Plans and the housing plans is a result of a provincial mandate to identify the targets for intensification, density targets, affordable housing, to name some. Further details on the provincial mandate and its impact on plan monitoring and evaluation are discussed in the final chapter.

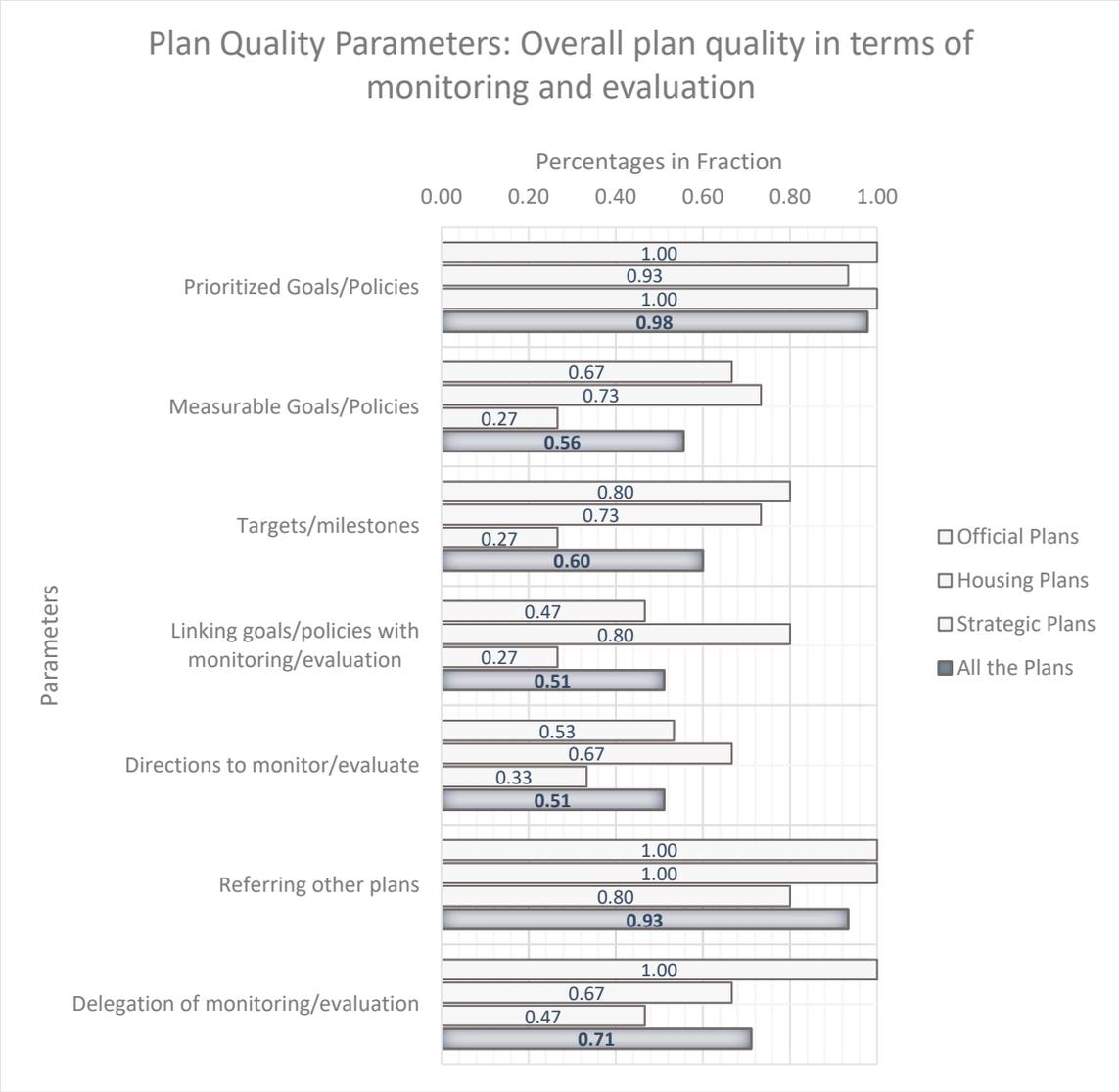


Figure 4.2 Plan Quality Parameters (factors): Overall Plan Quality in terms of Monitoring and Evaluation

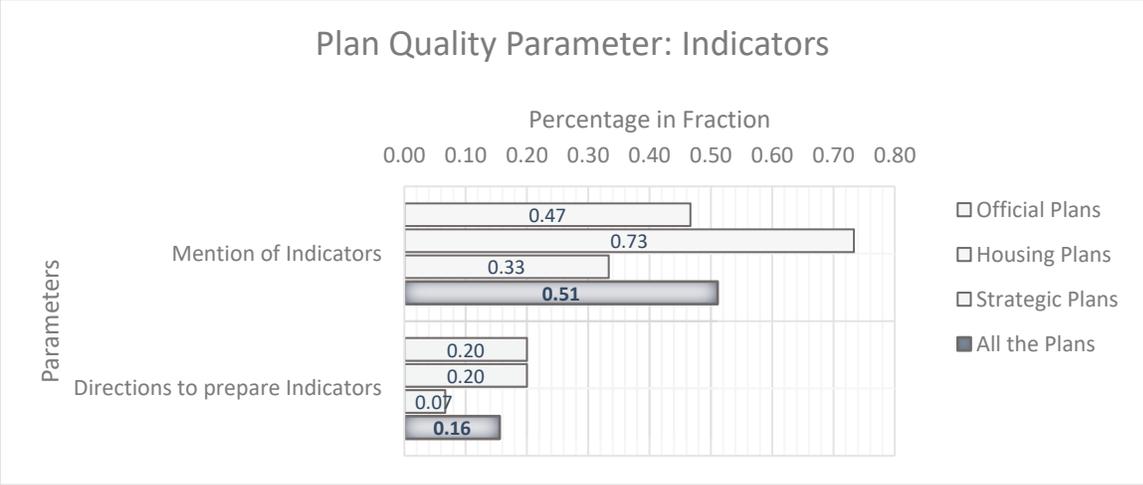


Figure 4.3 Plan Quality Parameter (factors): Indicators

Linking goals/policies with monitoring/evaluation percentages at 0.51 with housing plans at the top of 0.80, following the Official Plans at 0.47 and finally the strategic plans at 0.27. So, only half of all the plans link their goals/policies with the monitoring/evaluation section (or framework, if any). Directions to monitor/evaluate percentages at 0.51 with the Official Plans at 0.53, the housing plans at 0.67, and the strategic plans at 0.33. The overall result is the same as linking goals/policies with monitoring and evaluation, with just half the plans providing the directions to monitor and evaluate.

Referring other plans parameter has a overall percentage of 0.93, with the Official Plans and the housing plans at 1.00 and the strategic plans at 0.80. This means almost all the plans (all the official and housing plans) reviewed refer to other plans to increase cohesion. However, there is a flip side wherein the next parameters come into play. Some of the plans delegated their responsibility to monitor to other plans and reports. It is appropriate to delegate tasks if it is genuinely beyond the plan's scope, but to delegate the task which is within the scope of the plan hampers the effectiveness of the plan monitoring and evaluation process.

Thus, with a high result, the delegation of monitoring/evaluate parameter percentages out at 0.71, with the Official Plans at 1.00, the housing plans at 0.67 and the strategic plans at 0.47. Another prominent observation from this result is that for all the parameters under this classification, the strategic plans performed low and below the average of all the plans. This means that from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation, the strategic plan performed poorly compared with the Official Plans and housing plans.

Figure 4.3 depicts the results for the parameters under the classification of "Indicators." Mention of Indicators scored at 0.51 with housing plans at the top of 0.73, following the Official Plans at 0.43 and the strategic plans at 0.33. This means that only half of all the plans mentioned indicators. The identification and utilization of indicators for monitoring and evaluation is altogether a different ball game. In the case of directions to prepare indicators, all the plans averaged out at a low of 0.16, with the Official Plans and housing plans at 0.20 and the strategic plans at 0.07. This suggests that only a handful of the plans provided directions to identify or prepare indicators; the rest of the plans failed to do so.

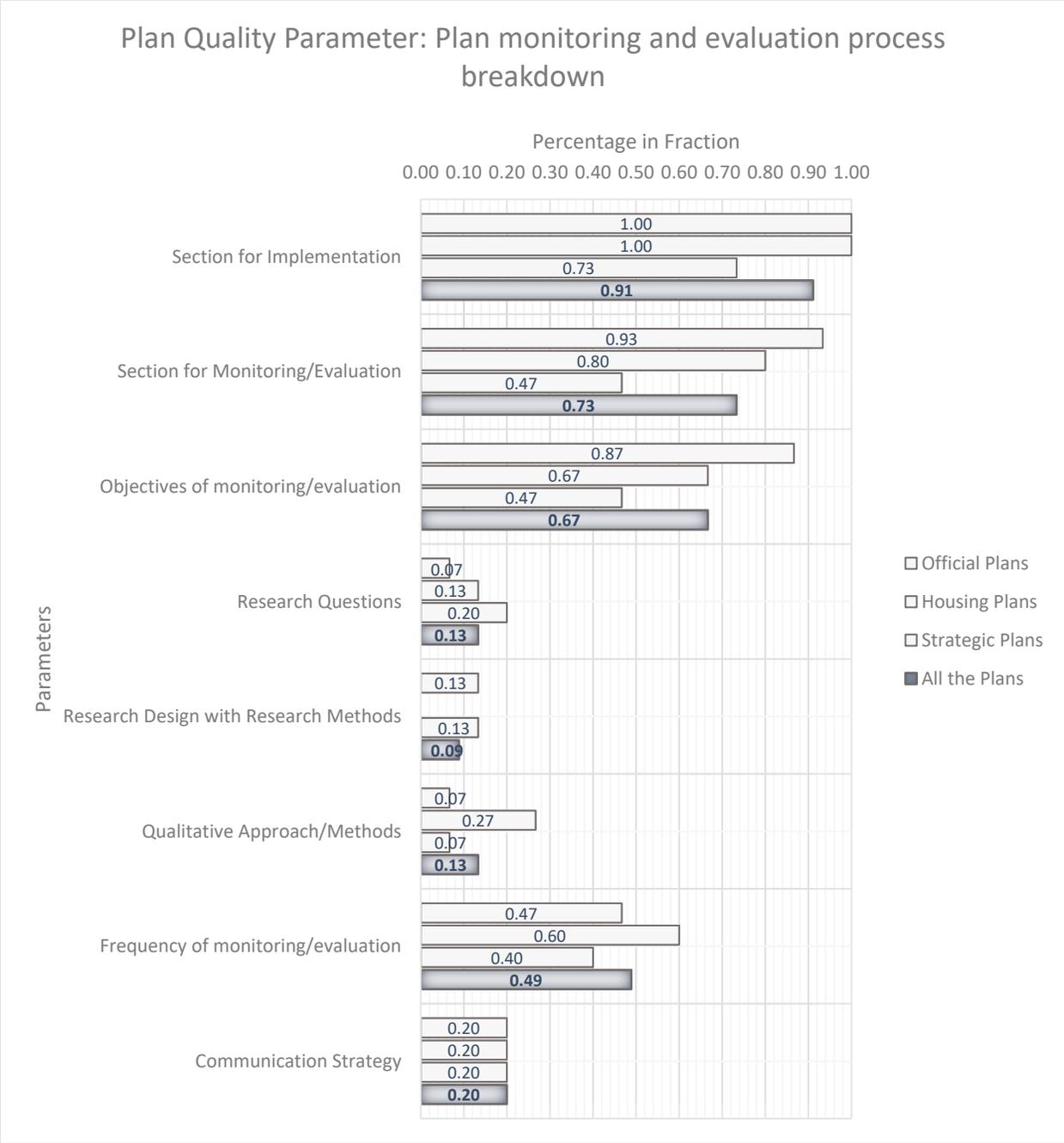


Figure 4.4 Plan Quality Parameter: Plan Monitoring and Evaluation Process Breakdown

Finally, Figure 4.4 depicts the results for the parameters classified under “Plan monitoring and evaluation process breakdown.” The section for Implementation parameter stands at a percentage of 0.91, with the Official Plans and housing plans at 1.00 and the strategic plans registering as 0.73. So, the majority of all the plans have an exclusive section for implementation.

With regard to the section on monitoring and evaluation, we note that there is a percentage of 0.73, with Official Plans at 0.93 and the housing plans at 0.80. In contrast, the strategic plan registered a low of 0.47. Still, close to two-thirds of all the plans had an exclusive section on plan monitoring and evaluation. The objective of monitoring/evaluation parameter percentages at 0.67, with the Official Plans at the top of 0.87, the housing plans at 0.67 and the strategic plans at 0.47. So, again, almost two-thirds of all the plans acknowledged the objective of monitoring/evaluation in their plans.

The research questions parameter performed significantly low with a percentage of 0.13, with the Official Plans at a low of 0.07, the housing plans at 0.13, and the strategic plans at 0.20. The research design with research methods parameter stands out as the lowest of all the parameters identified, with a percentage of just 0.07. The Official Plans and the strategic plans had a percentage of 0.13, whereas none of the housing plans have this parameter present with a percentage of 0.00. Qualitative approach/methods performed at a low of 0.13, with the Official Plans and the strategic plans at 0.07, and the housing plans at 0.27. All the three parameters - research questions, research design with research methods, and qualitative approaches/methods - are essential for a robust plan monitoring and evaluation process. The absence of these parameters in most of all the plans under review indicates a significant gap from the perspective of best practices in plan monitoring and evaluation. (Further synthesis and commentary on these parameters are conducted in the final chapter).

The frequency of monitoring/evaluation parameter percentages at 0.49, with the Official Plans at 0.47, the housing plans at 0.60, and the strategic plans at 0.40. This suggests that roughly half of all the plans have identified the frequencies to monitor/evaluate. It should be noted that as per the literature review, under the ideal case scenario, the frequency of monitoring and evaluation should reflect the research design and evaluation approach developed. However, no plan identified these frequencies, so for the sake of this research, both the frequencies were combined.

Finally, the communication strategy parameter had a percentage of 0.20, with all three plans averaging at 0.20. This means only one-fifth of all the plans identified the communication strategy in their plan’s sections on monitoring and evaluation.

4.2.2.2 Results for Reports

Figure 4.5 depicts the result for all the 31 reports analyzed under content analysis. The majority of the reports have linked with their respective plans, as the percentage of the linking with plans parameter averages out at 0.97. In contrast, the percentage of directions/detail on monitoring and evaluation parameter is just 0.35, which means that only 35 percent of all the reports provided directions to monitor and evaluate. Similar to the result for plans, in the case of reports as well, the links to a research question/identify research question parameter performed a low of 0.19, research design with research methods parameter averages at just 0.06, and inclusion of qualitative approach/methods parameter averaged out at a low of 0.10.

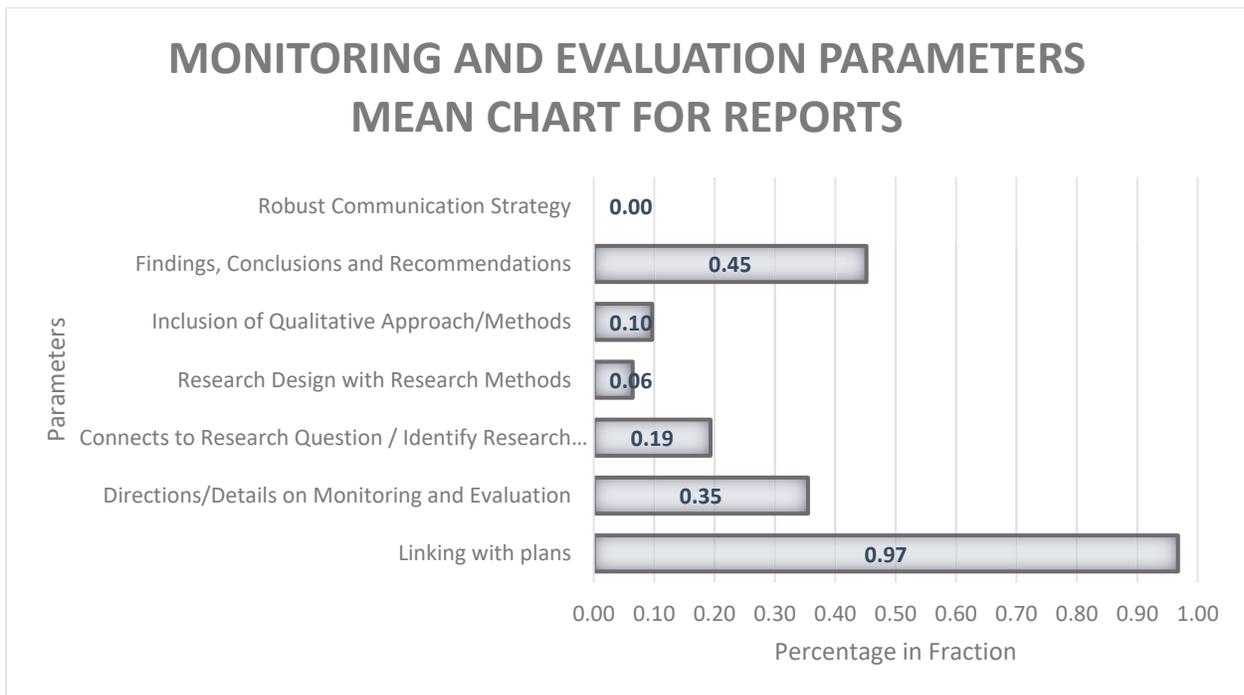


Figure 4.5 Report Quality Parameters

The findings, conclusions, and recommendations parameter produced a percentage of 0.45, meaning that only half of the reports generated appropriate findings, conclusions, and recommendations using some research approach. The rest of the reports simply provided

updates on the activities conducted and seem not have followed a formalized research program as the basis for evaluation conclusions and recommendations. Finally, none of the 31 reports described a robust communication strategy to communicate the results and outcomes from the evaluation to plan stakeholders.

4.2.3 Individual Municipality Analysis

4.2.3.1 City of Toronto

The City of Toronto is the most populated single-tier municipality of Ontario. The City of Toronto's population was 2.73 million as per Census 2016, and the city covers 630.2 square kilometers of area. Given the size, population, and economy, the City of Toronto, the capital of Ontario, bears enormous responsibilities on the city planners' shoulders to direct the city so that the city's legacy is maintained and carried forward.

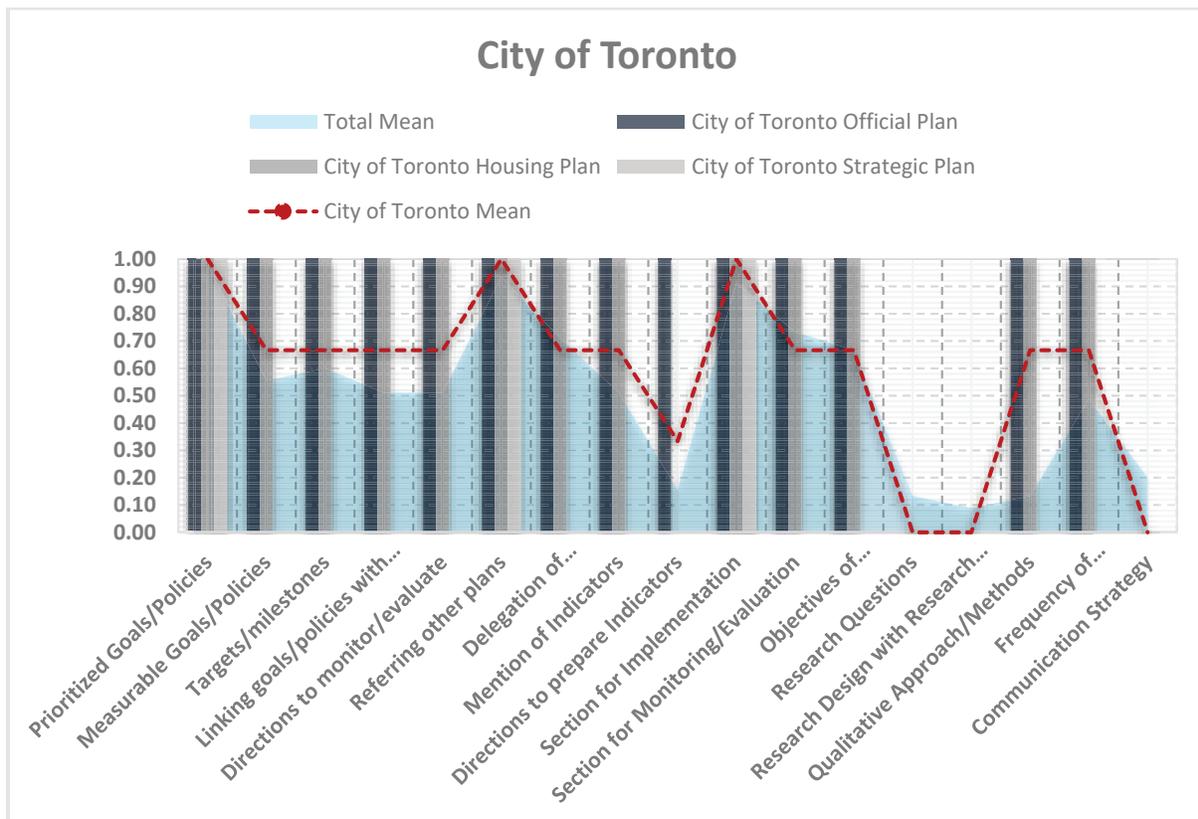


Figure 4.6 City of Toronto Individual Municipality-wise Result

As mentioned before, the Official Plan is the primary document that all the municipalities within Ontario must prepare; the City of Toronto’s Official Plan was adopted by the City Council in November 2002. This research reviews the February 2019 consolidated version of the Toronto Official Plan. Further, Appendix 1 Sample Plans and Reports Under Study mentions all the City of Toronto’s secondary plans/policies and reports reviewed under this study.

Figure 4.6 depicts the overall result for the City of Toronto Official Plan and the housing and strategic plans. The red line represents percentage of all the plans for the City of Toronto, and the blue area in the background is the percentage of all the 45 plans reviewed under this content analysis exercise. As in Figure 4.6, the red line is almost close to or above the blue area, with only three parameters falling below the blue area – research questions, research design with research methods, communication strategy. This means the City of Toronto’s plan performed better than the average of all the 45 plans reviewed under this study.

Table 4.3 City of Toronto Scores and Ranking

Municipality	Official Plans		Housing Plans		Strategic Plans		All the Plans	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
City of Toronto	7.50	1.00	6.88	2.00	1.88	8.00	5.42	4.00

Table 4.3 depicts the scores and ranks of all the plans for the City of Toronto. Overall, for all the plans, the city's score is 5.42 out of 10 and is ranked four. The City performed the best in Official Plans with first rank and score of 7.50, whereas it ranked second for housing plan with a score of 6.88. In contrast, the City performed quite badly in the strategic plan with a score of 1.88 and ranked eight.

4.2.3.2 Regional Municipality of Peel

The Region of Peel is the second-largest municipality after the City of Toronto. The Region of Peel is an upper-tier municipality and has other lower-tier municipalities operating under it. As per the census 2016, the population in the Region of Peel was 1.38 million and occupied 1,247 square kilometers of area. Again, being a huge municipality, planning is a really important function for the Region of Peel.

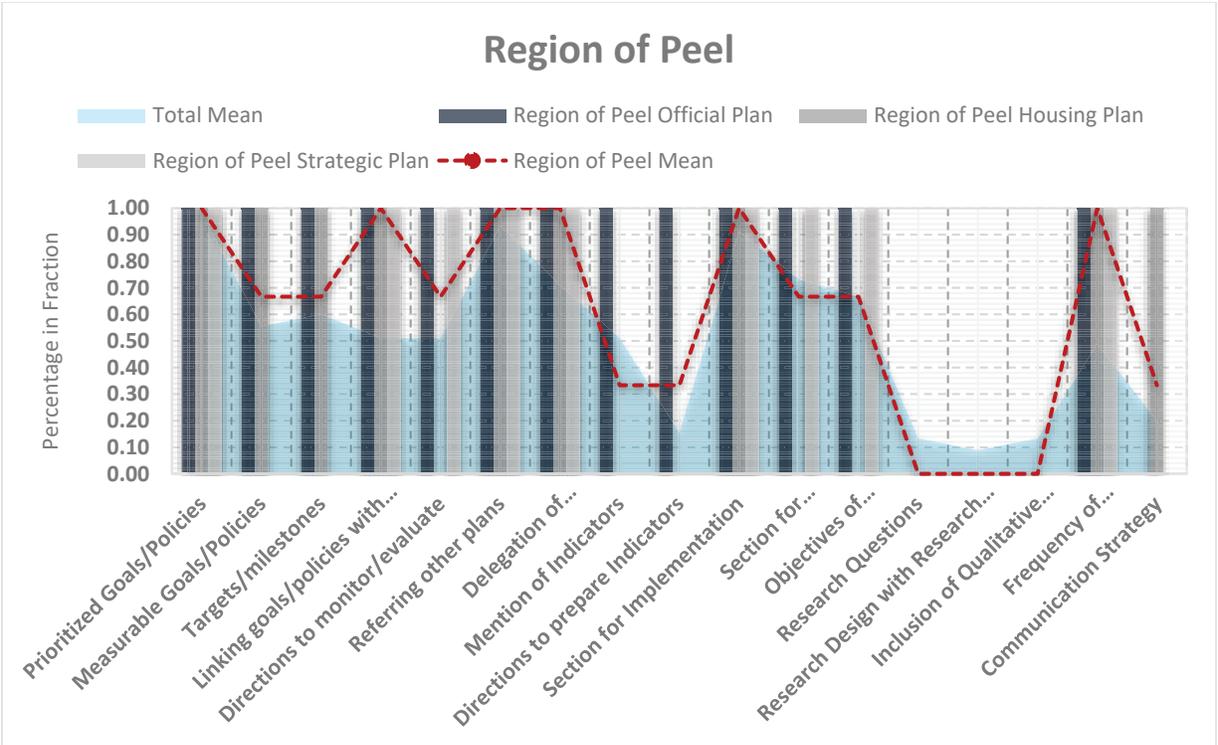


Figure 4.7 Region of Peel Individual Municipality-wise Result

Table 4.4 Region of Peel Scores and Ranking

Municipality	Official Plans		Housing Plans		Strategic Plans		All the Plans	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
Region of Peel	6.88	2.00	4.38	7.00	4.38	4.00	5.21	5.00

Figure 4.7 depicts the performance of all the plans of Region of Peel reviewed under this content analysis exercise. As compared with the total percentage of all the 45 plans, Region of Peel’s percentage is almost above average in many aspects, with the exception of the mention of indicators, a section for monitoring/evaluation, research questions, research design with research methods, and qualitative approaches/methods. However, based on the score and ranking mentioned in Table 4.4, the Official Plan ranked second by scoring 6.88. This means the housing plan and the strategic plan are dragging the average down in the Region of Peel.

4.2.3.3 Region of York

The Region of York is the third largest upper-tier municipality of Ontario with a population of 1.11 million as per census 2016 and 1,762 square kilometers of area. Again, being one of the largest municipalities in Ontario, urban and regional planning is a high priority in the Region of York.

Table 4.5 Region of York Scores and Ranking

Municipality	Official Plans		Housing Plans		Strategic Plans		All the Plans	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
Region of York	7.50	1.00	6.25	3.00	8.75	1.00	7.50	1.00

Figure 4.8 depicts the result of the plans under the content analysis exercise. The red line depicting the percentage of all the plans is above the blue area in all the parameters but the qualitative approach/methods. Thus, the Region of York performed quite well under the content analysis exercise. As mentioned in Table 4.5, the Region of York ranked first in the content analysis exercise amongst all the plans with a score of 7.50. As well, the region ranked first within the Official Plans with a score of 7.50 and the strategic plans with a score of 8.75. For housing plans, the region scored 6.25 with a rank of three.

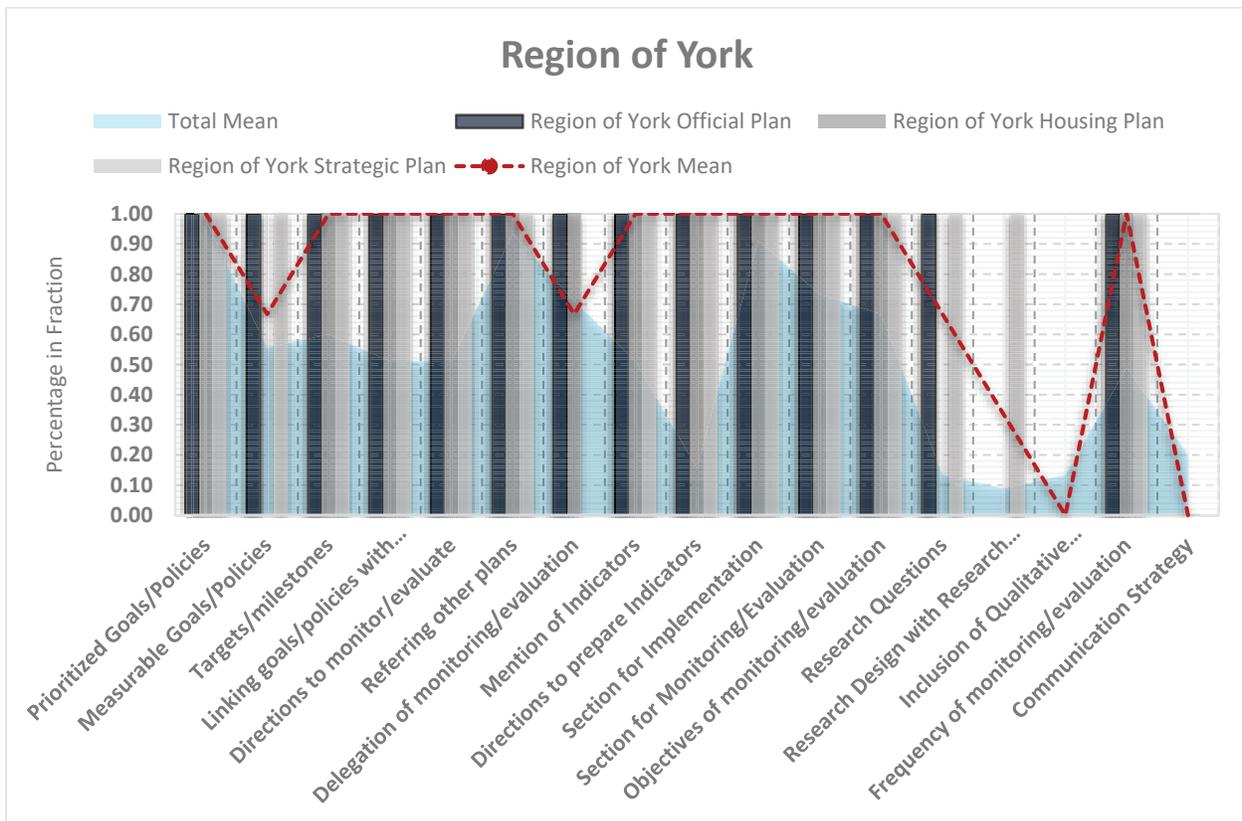


Figure 4.8 Region of York Individual Municipality-wise Result

4.2.3.4 City of Ottawa

The City of Ottawa, in the nation's capital, has a population of 0.93 million as per census 2016. It is the fourth highly populated single-tier municipality in Ontario, with an area of 2,790 square kilometers. However, from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation under the content analysis exercise, the city performed quite badly. As mentioned in Table 4.6, the municipality scored a low of 3.33 for all the plans with an overall rank of 11th position. The Official Plan scored 3.75 with 9th rank, for the housing plans it scored 5.00 with 6th rank, and for the strategic plans, it scored 1.25 with 9th rank.

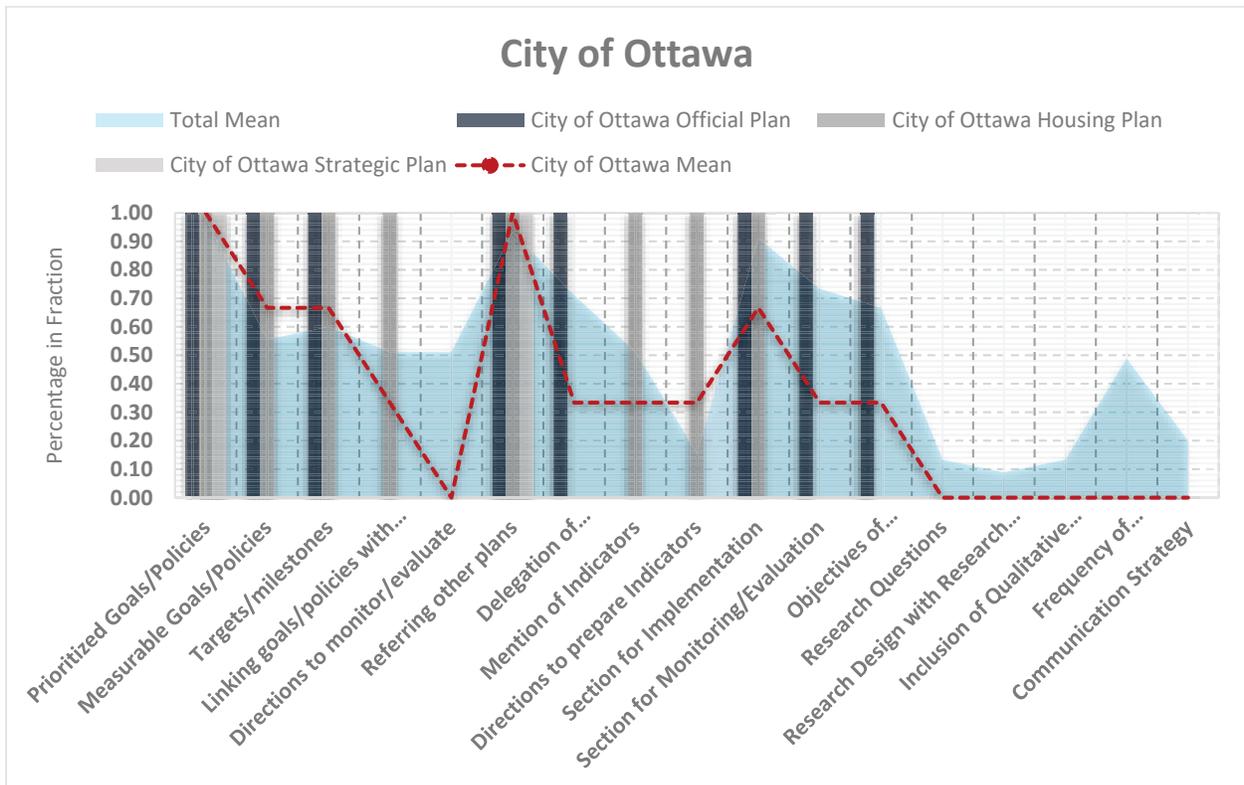


Figure 4.9 City of Ottawa Individual Municipality Wise Result

Further, as mentioned in Figure 4.9, the red line depicting the percentage of the City of Ottawa is only slightly above the blue area depicting the total percentage for three parameters – measurable goals/policies, targets/milestones, and directions to prepare indicators. This clearly depicts the low performance of the quality of plans from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation in the case of the City of Ottawa.

Table 4.6 City of Ottawa Scores and Ranking

Municipality	Official Plans		Housing Plans		Strategic Plans		All the Plans	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
City of Ottawa	3.75	9.00	5.00	6.00	1.25	9.00	3.33	11.00

4.2.3.5 Regional Municipality of Durham

The Region of Durham has a population count of 645, 000 residents as per census 2016, and it is the sixth-largest upper-tier municipality population-wise in Ontario. The region spans 2,523 square kilometers. The Region of Durham consistently under-performed in this content analysis exercise.

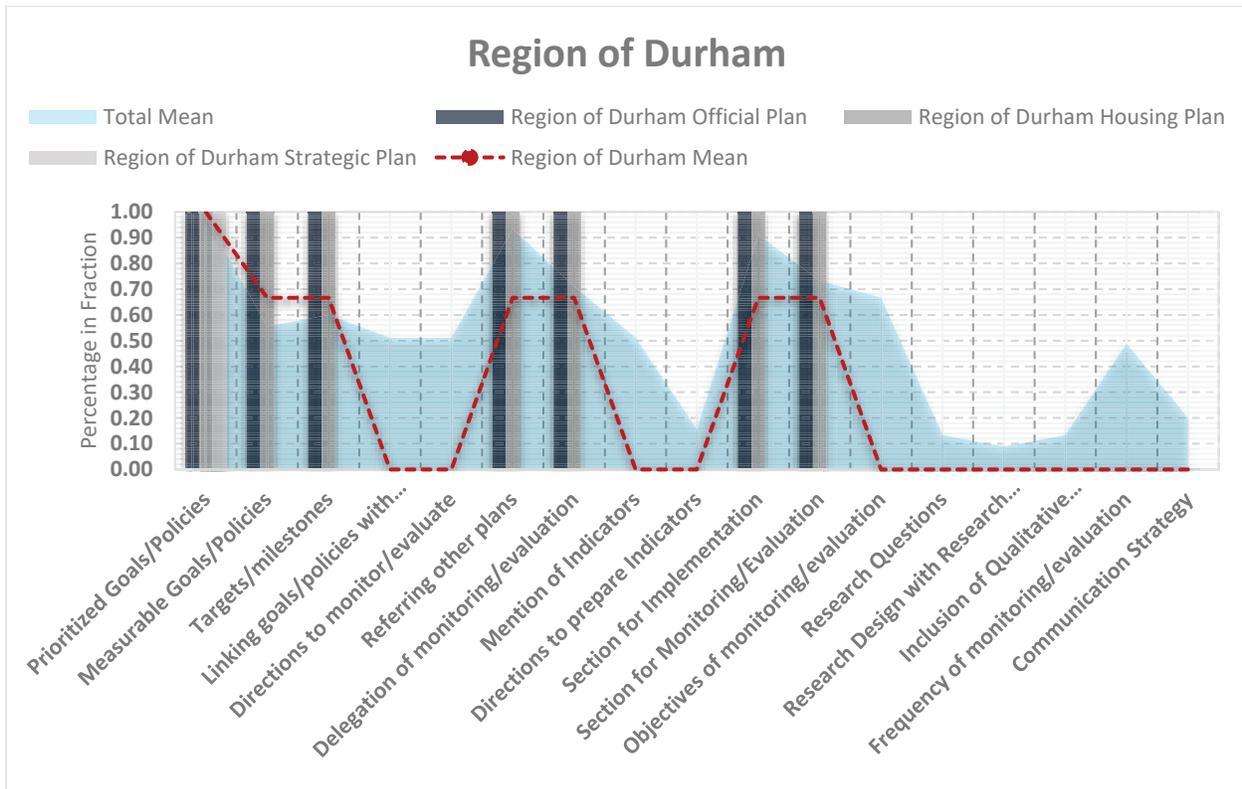


Figure 4.10 Region of Durham Individual Municipality-wise Result

As per Table 4.7, the Region scored 2.29 with the lowest rank of 12. The Official Plan scored 3.13 with 10th rank; the housing plans scored 3.13 with 8th rank; the strategic plan scored 0.63 with the lowest rank of 10th position. Also, as mentioned in Figure 4.10, the regional percentage is below the total percentage in all the parameters, but the measurable goals/policies and

targets/milestones. Again, this result depicts poor plan quality from the perspective of monitoring and evaluation in the case of Region of Durham.

Table 4.7 Region of Durham Scores and Ranking

Municipality	Official Plans		Housing Plans		Strategic Plans		All the Plans	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
Region of Durham	3.13	10.00	3.13	8.00	0.63	10.00	2.29	12.00

4.2.3.6 Regional Municipality of Halton

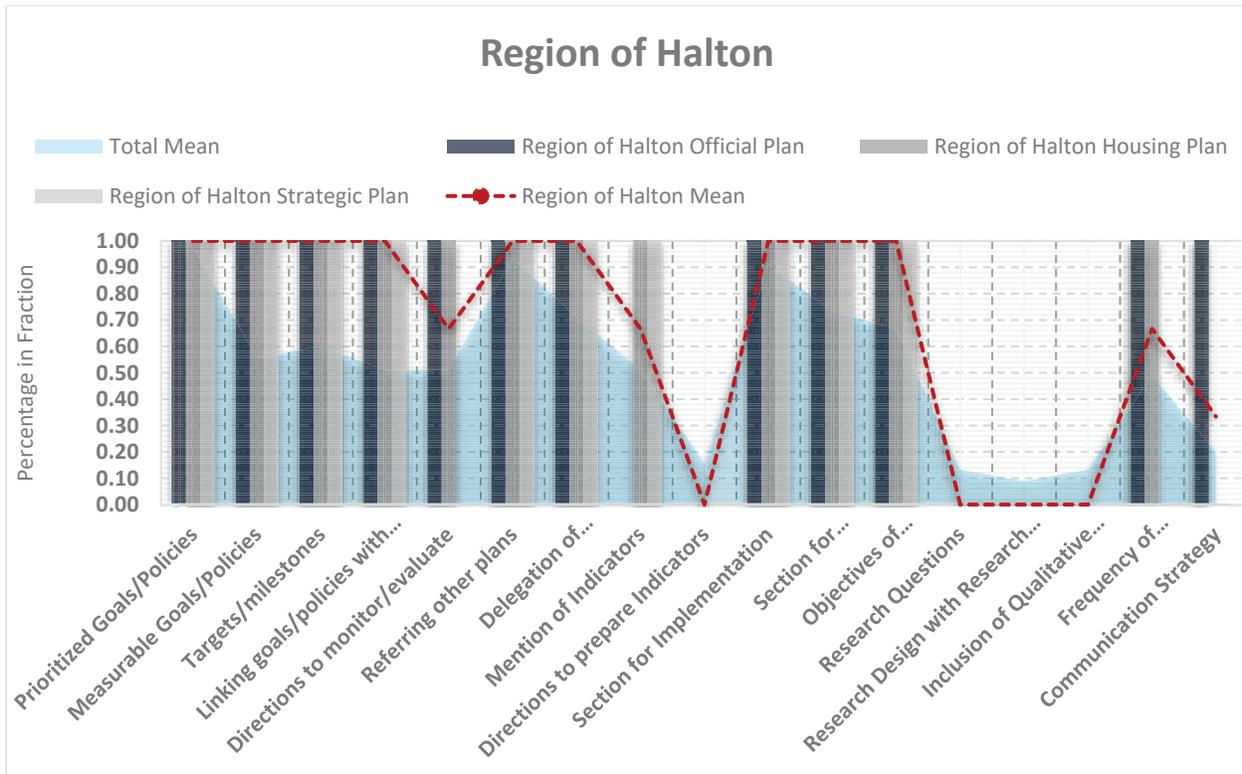


Figure 4.11 Region of Halton Individual Municipality-wise Result

The Region of Halton is the sixth-largest upper-tier municipality in Ontario, with a population of 548,000 as per census 2016. In terms of area, the region spans 964 square kilometers. Comparatively, as mentioned in Table 4.8, this Region performed quite well with a score of 5.83, ranking 3rd for the percentage of all the plans. The Official Plan scored 6.25 with 3rd rank, the housing plan scored 6.25 with 3rd rank, and the strategic plan scored 5.00 with 3rd rank as well. Thus, the Region of Halton performed quite well with a balanced result amongst all the three types of plans reviewed. Figure 4.11 clearly depicts the result with seven parameters averaging

“1”. The Regional percentage is above the total percentage in almost all the parameters, but directions to prepare indicators, research questions, research design with research methods, and inclusion of qualitative approach/methods.

Table 4.8 Region of Halton Scores and Ranking

Municipality	Official Plans		Housing Plans		Strategic Plans		All the Plans	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
Region of Halton	6.25	3.00	6.25	3.00	5.00	3.00	5.83	3.00

4.2.3.7 City of Hamilton

The City of Hamilton is the seventh highly populated single-tier municipality in Ontario, with 537,000 residents as per census 2016. In terms of area, the city spans 1,138 square kilometers. The City of Hamilton performed quite well under this content analysis exercise, with the total score for all the plans being 5.83 and 3rd rank, as shown in Table 4.9. The Official Plan ranked 6th with a score of 5.00, the housing plan ranked 3rd with a score of 6.25, and the strategic plan ranked 2nd with a score of 6.25.

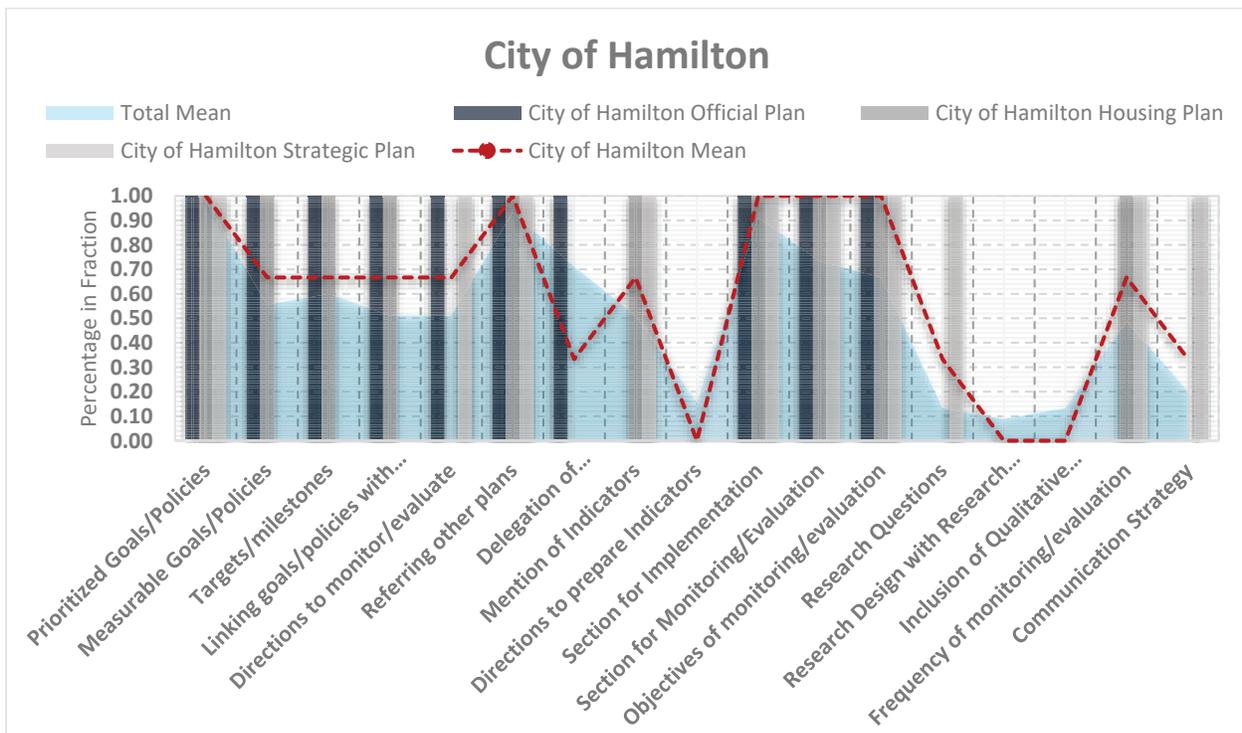


Figure 4.12 City of Hamilton Individual Municipality-wise Result

Further, Figure 4.12 portrays that the City's percentage is above the total percentage in almost all the parameters, excluding directions to prepare indicators, research design with research methods and inclusion of qualitative approach/methods.

Table 4.9 City of Hamilton Scores and Ranking

Municipality	Official Plans		Housing Plans		Strategic Plans		All the Plans	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
City of Hamilton	5.00	6.00	6.25	3.00	6.25	2.00	5.83	3.00

4.2.3.8 Regional Municipality of Waterloo

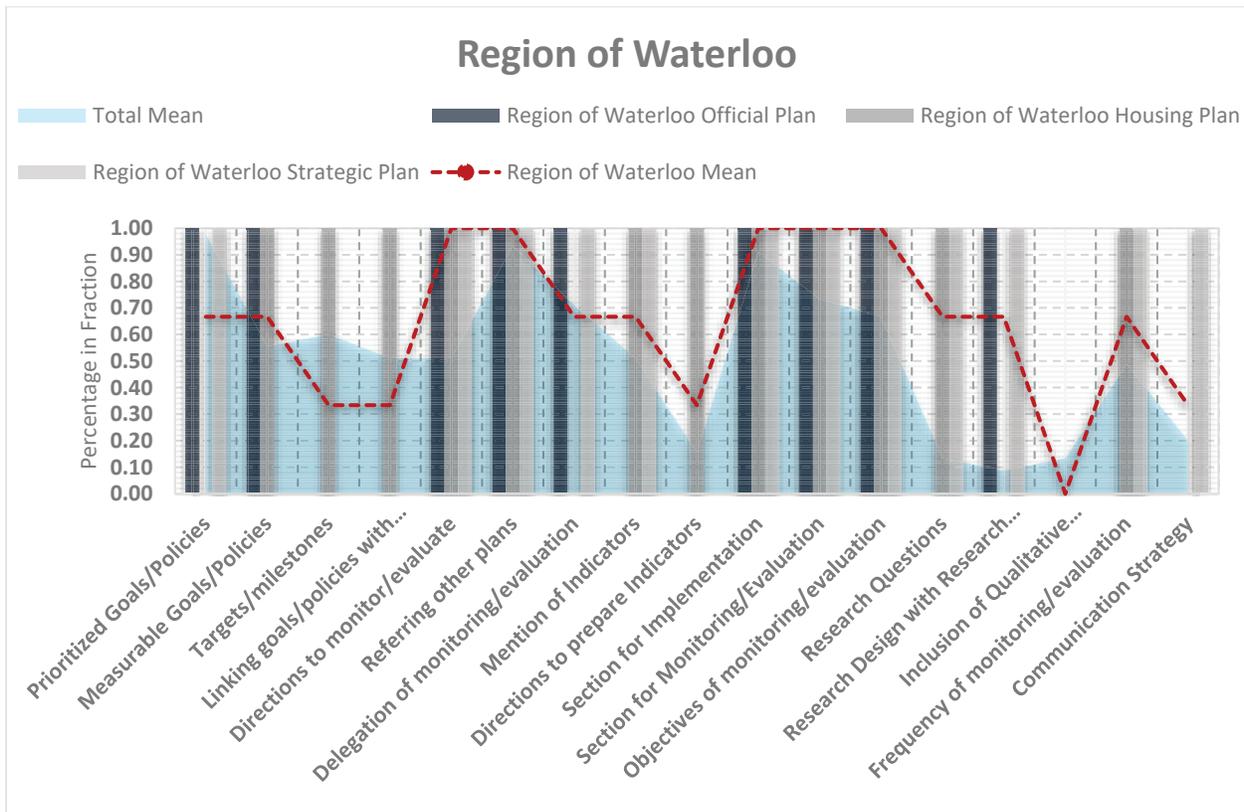


Figure 4.13 Region of Waterloo Individual Municipality-wise Result

The Region of Waterloo is the eighth largest upper-tier municipality in Ontario, spanning 1,369 square kilometers. Its population is 535,000 residents as per the census 2016. In terms of this content analysis exercise, the Region performed quite well.

As mentioned in Table 4.10, this Region ranked 2nd with a score of 6.04 for all the plans. It performed above average for the Official Plan with a score of 4.38 and 8th rank. In contrast, the Region performed quite well for the housing plan with a score of 7.50 and 1st rank, and for the

strategic plan with a score of 6.25 and 2nd rank. Figure 4.13 depicts that for all the parameters, the percentage of the Region is above the total percentage, excluding targets/milestones, linking goals/policies with monitoring/evaluation, and inclusion of qualitative approach/methods.

Table 4.10 Region of Waterloo Scores and Ranking

Municipality	Official Plans		Housing Plans		Strategic Plans		All the Plans	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
Region of Waterloo	4.38	8.00	7.50	1.00	6.25	2.00	6.04	2.00

4.2.3.9 Regional Municipality of Niagara

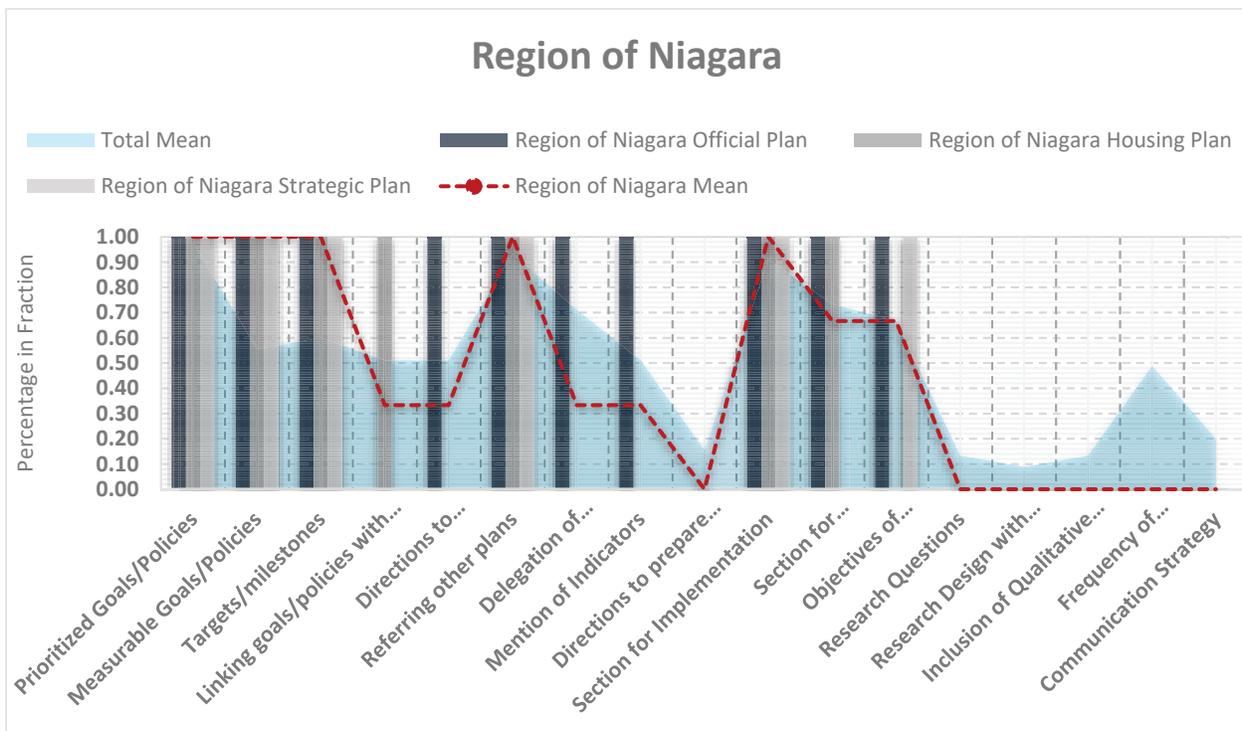


Figure 4.14 Region of Niagara Individual Municipality-wise Result

The Region of Niagara is an upper-tier municipality in Ontario with a population of 448,000 residents as per the census 2016. In terms of area, the region comprises 1,854 square kilometers. Under this content analysis exercise, this Region performed slightly below or close to the average.

Table 4.11 Region of Niagara Scores and Ranking

Municipality	Official Plans		Housing Plans		Strategic Plans		All the Plans	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
Region of Niagara	5.00	6.00	4.38	7.00	3.75	5.00	4.38	7.00

As mentioned in Table 4.11, the Region ranked 7th with a score of 4.38. The Official Plan scored 5.00 with 6th rank, the housing plan scored 4.38 with 7th rank, and the strategic plan scored 3.75 with 5th rank. Only two of the parameters performed better compared to the total percentage of all the plans, namely, measurable goals/policies and targets/milestones, as mentioned in Figure 4.14.

4.2.3.10 City of London

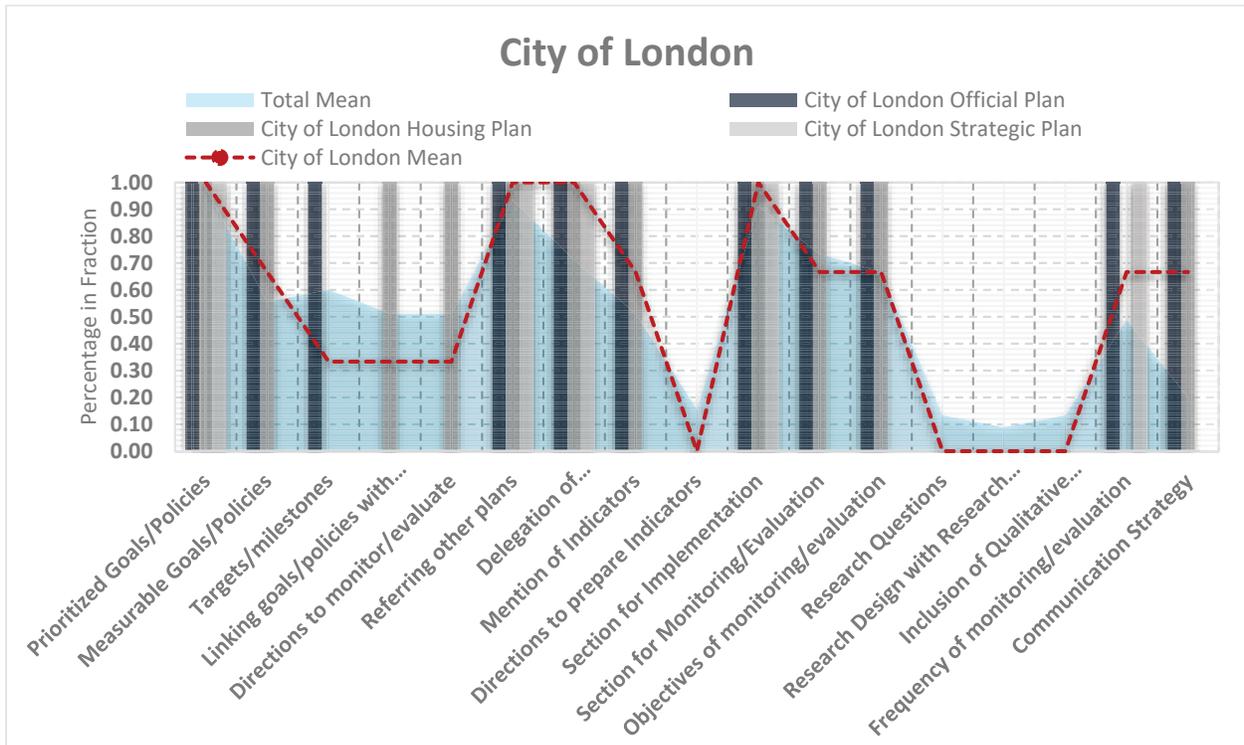


Figure 4.15 City of London Individual Municipality-wise Result

The City of London is a single-tier municipality in Ontario with 384,000 residents as per census 2016, covering 420.6 square kilometers of area. In terms of monitoring and evaluation, the City performed close to or a bit below average. As mentioned in Table 4.12, the city ranked 7th with a score of 4.38 for all the plans, ranked 4th with a score of 5.63 for the Official Plan, ranked 4th with a score of 5.63 for the housing plan, and ranked 8th with a score of 1.88 for the strategic plan.

Table 4.12 City of London Scores and Ranking

Municipality	Official Plans		Housing Plans		Strategic Plans		All the Plans	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
City of London	5.63	4.00	5.63	4.00	1.88	8.00	4.38	7.00

Figure 4.15 depicts the performance chart for the City of London. The City’s percentage outperformed the total percentage for the following parameters – measurable goals/policies, referring other plans, mention of indicators, frequency of monitoring/evaluation, and communication strategy.

4.2.3.11 City of Greater Sudbury

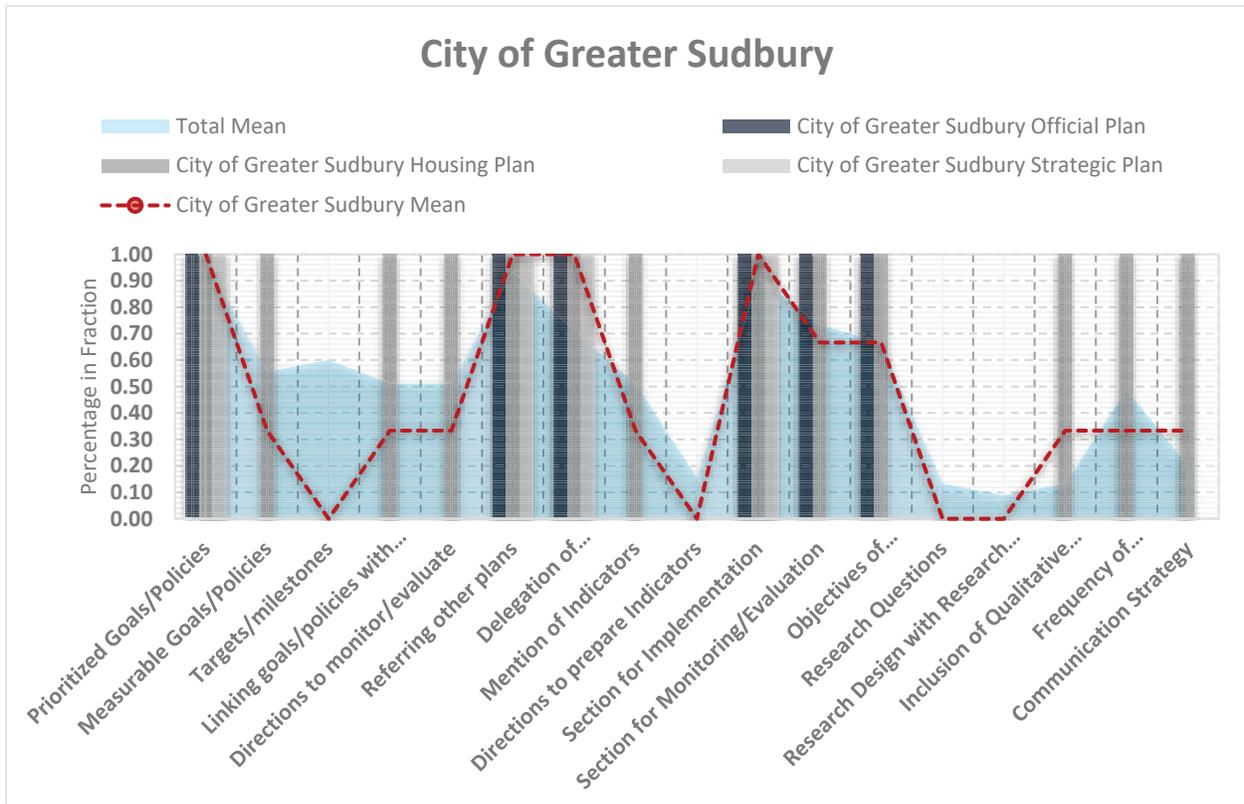


Figure 4.16 City of Greater Sudbury Individual Municipality-wise Result

The City of Greater Sudbury is located in the northern part of Ontario with a population of 162,000 as per the 2016 census. In terms of area, the City spans 3,288 square kilometers. The city performed poorly under the content analysis of the plans.

Table 4.13 City of Greater Sudbury Scores and Ranking

Municipality	Official Plans		Housing Plans		Strategic Plans		All the Plans	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
City of Greater Sudbury	2.50	11.00	6.88	2.00	1.25	9.00	3.54	10.00

As mentioned in the Table 4.13, the city ranked 10th with a score of 3.54 for all its plans. The Official Plan scored 2.50 with 11th rank, the housing plan scored 6.88 with 2nd rank, and the strategic plan scored 1.25 with 9th rank. Thus, the housing plan is an outlier in the case of the City of Greater Sudbury.

Figure 4.16 clearly portrays the bar representing the housing plan for the majority of the parameters. Cumulatively, the City’s percentage performed better than the total percentage for two parameters only – Inclusion of Qualitative Approach/Methods and Communication Strategy.

4.2.3.12 County of Oxford

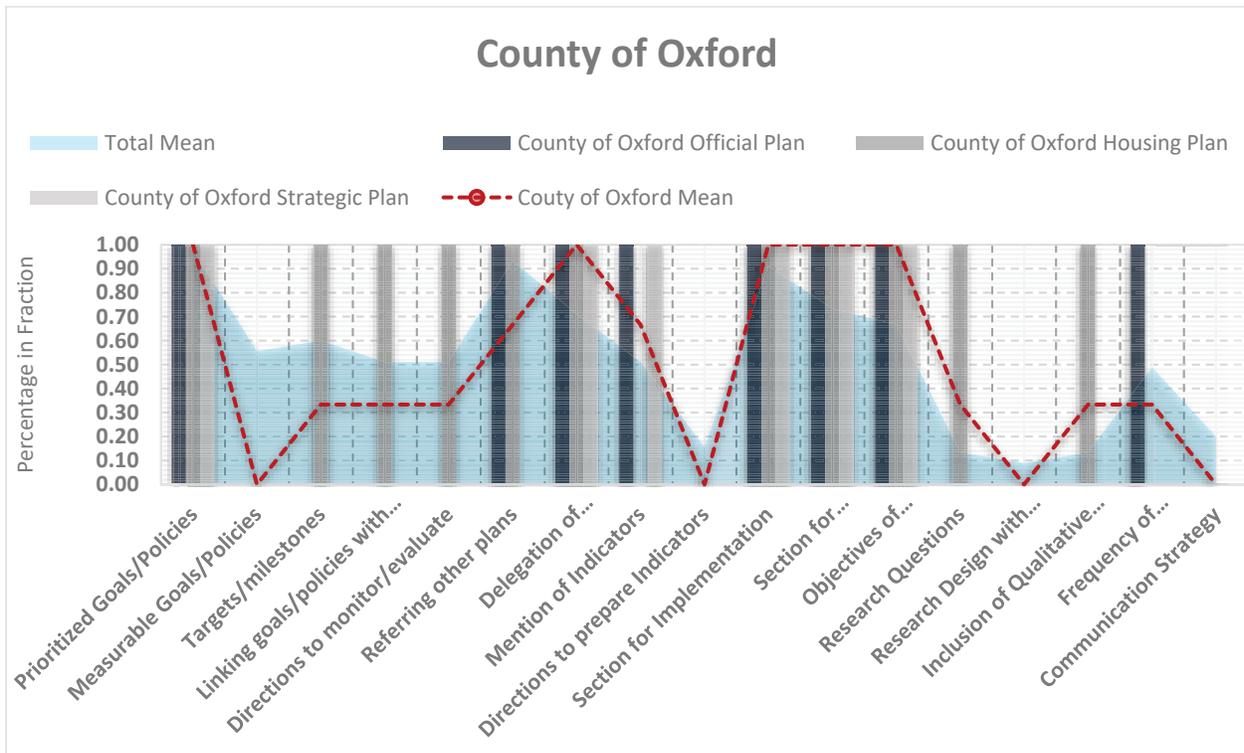


Figure 4.17 County of Oxford Individual Municipality-wise Result

The County of Oxford is an upper-tier municipality with 111,000 residents as per the 2016 census. Area-wise, the County spans 2,040 square kilometers. As mentioned in Table 4.14, the County performed below average in this content analysis exercise, with 9th rank and 3.96 score for all the plans. The Official Plan scored 3.75 with 9th rank, the housing plan scored 5.63 with 4th rank, and the strategic plan scored 2.50 with 7th rank.

Further, as depicted in Figure 4.17, the percentage of the County out-performed the total percentage in the following five parameters – mention of indicators, a section for monitoring/evaluation, objectives for monitoring/evaluation, research questions and inclusion of qualitative approach/methods. The Official Plan and the strategic plan dragged down the average of all the plans for the County of Oxford.

Table 4.14 County of Oxford Scores and Ranking

Municipality	Official Plans		Housing Plans		Strategic Plans		All the Plans	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
County of Oxford	3.75	9.00	5.63	4.00	2.50	7.00	3.96	9.00

4.2.3.13 County of Norfolk

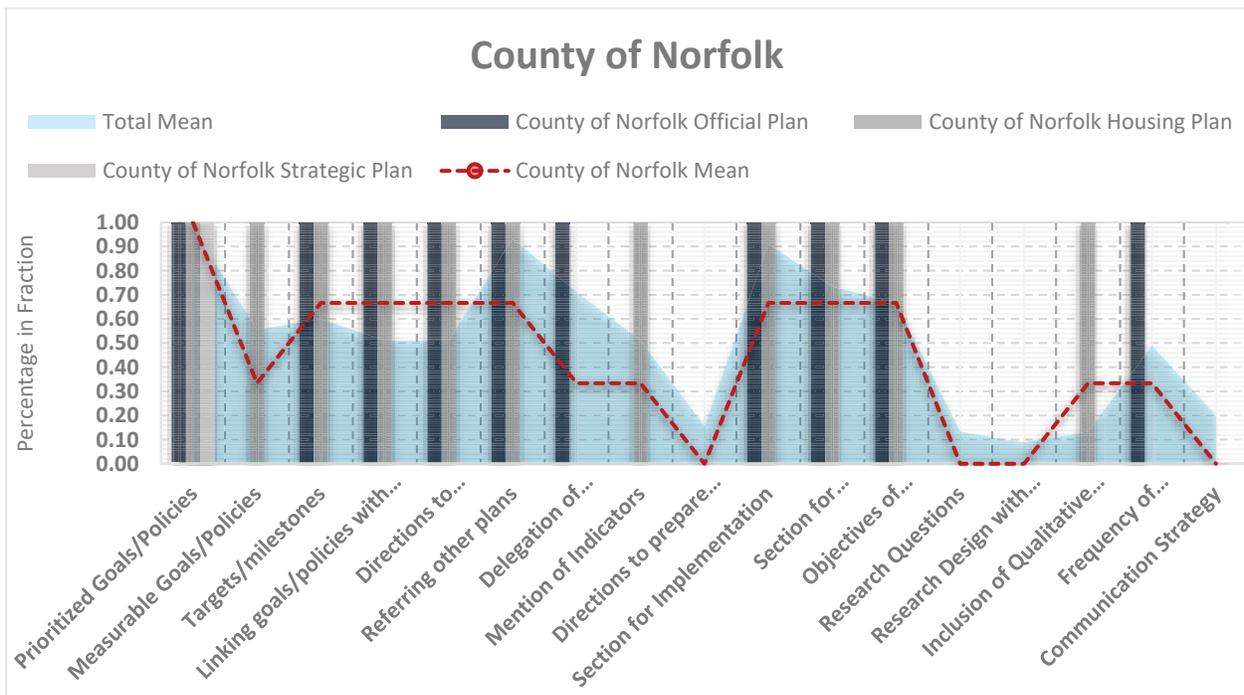


Figure 4.18 County of Norfolk Individual Municipality-wise Result

The County of Norfolk is an upper-tier municipality in Ontario spanning 1,607 square kilometers with 64,000 residents in 2016. The County performed slightly below the average, with the total score being 4.17 and 8th rank, as mentioned in Table 4.15. The Official Plan scored 5.00 with 6th rank, the housing plan scored 6.88 with 2nd rank, and the strategic plan scored 0.63 with 10th rank. Thus, the strategic plan is significantly under-performing the percentage for all the plans.

Table 4.15 County of Norfolk Scores and Ranking

Municipality	Official Plans		Housing Plans		Strategic Plans		All the Plans	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
County of Norfolk	5.00	6.00	6.88	2.00	0.63	10.00	4.17	8.00

Figure 4.18 depicts the County's percentage above the total mean for the following four parameters – targets/milestones, linking goals/policies with monitoring/evaluation, direction to monitor/evaluate, and inclusion of qualitative approach/methods.

4.2.3.14 District Municipality of Muskoka

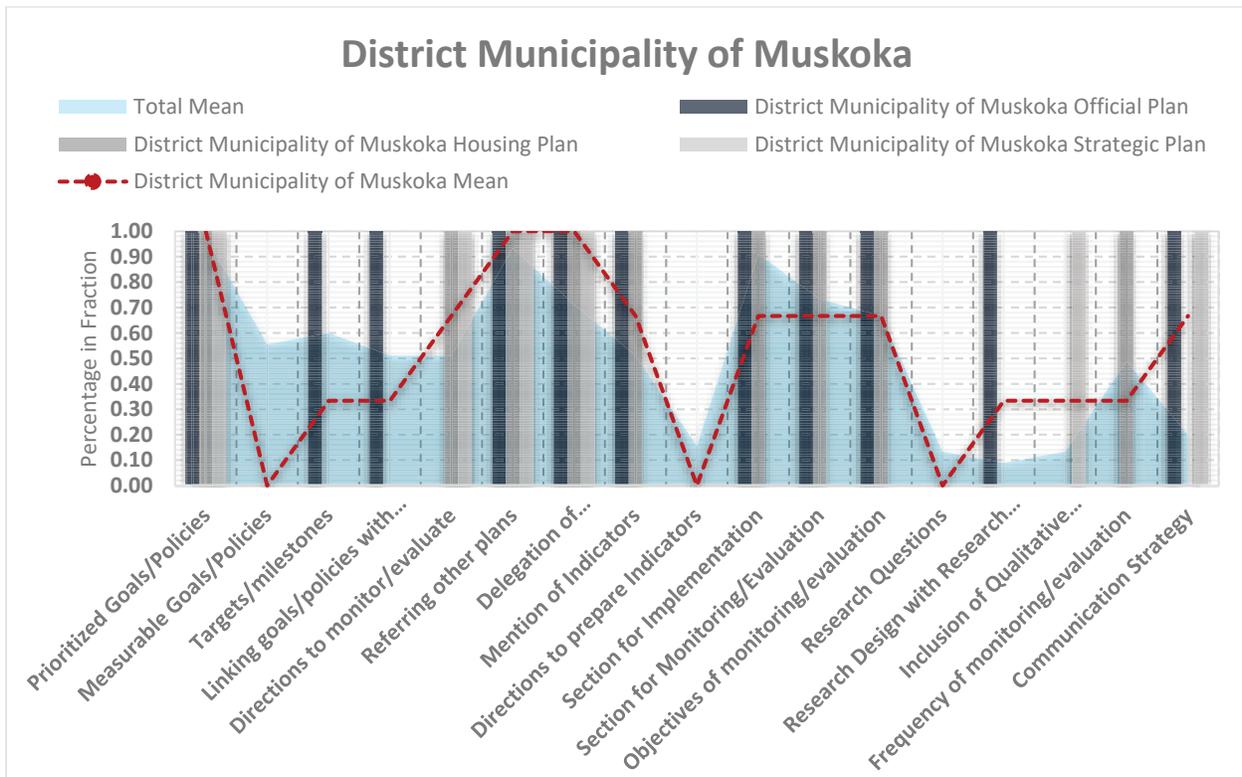


Figure 4.19 District Municipality of Muskoka Individual Municipality-wise Result

The District Municipality of Muskoka is an upper-tier municipality in Ontario with a population of 61,000 (2016 Census) and an area spanning 3,938 square kilometres. Geographically, the municipality is located above the Greater Golden Horseshoe and below Greater Sudbury. Under the content analysis, as mentioned in Table 4.16, the DM of Muskoka scored 4.17 with 8th rank. The Official Plan scored 5.63 with 5th rank, the housing plan scored 4.38 with 7th rank, and the strategic plan scored 2.50 with 7th rank. Further, as depicted in Figure 4.19, the percentage of the DM of Muskoka out-performed the total percentage for the following parameters – directions to

monitor/evaluate, mention of indicators, research design with research methods, the inclusion of qualitative approach/methods, and communication strategy.

Table 4.16 District Municipality of Muskoka Scores and Ranking

Municipality	Official Plans		Housing Plans		Strategic Plans		All the Plans	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
DM of Muskoka	5.63	5.00	4.38	7.00	2.50	7.00	4.17	8.00

4.2.3.15 County of Huron

The County of Huron is an upper-tier municipality of Ontario with a population of 59,000 as per the 2016 census. In terms of area, the County spans 3,397 square kilometers. The County performed poorly under the content analysis exercise, with a score of 3.33 and 11th rank for all the plans. The Official Plan scored 1.88 on the 12th position, the housing plan scored 3.13 on the 8th position, and the strategic plan scored 5.00 on the 3rd position, as mentioned in Table 4.17.

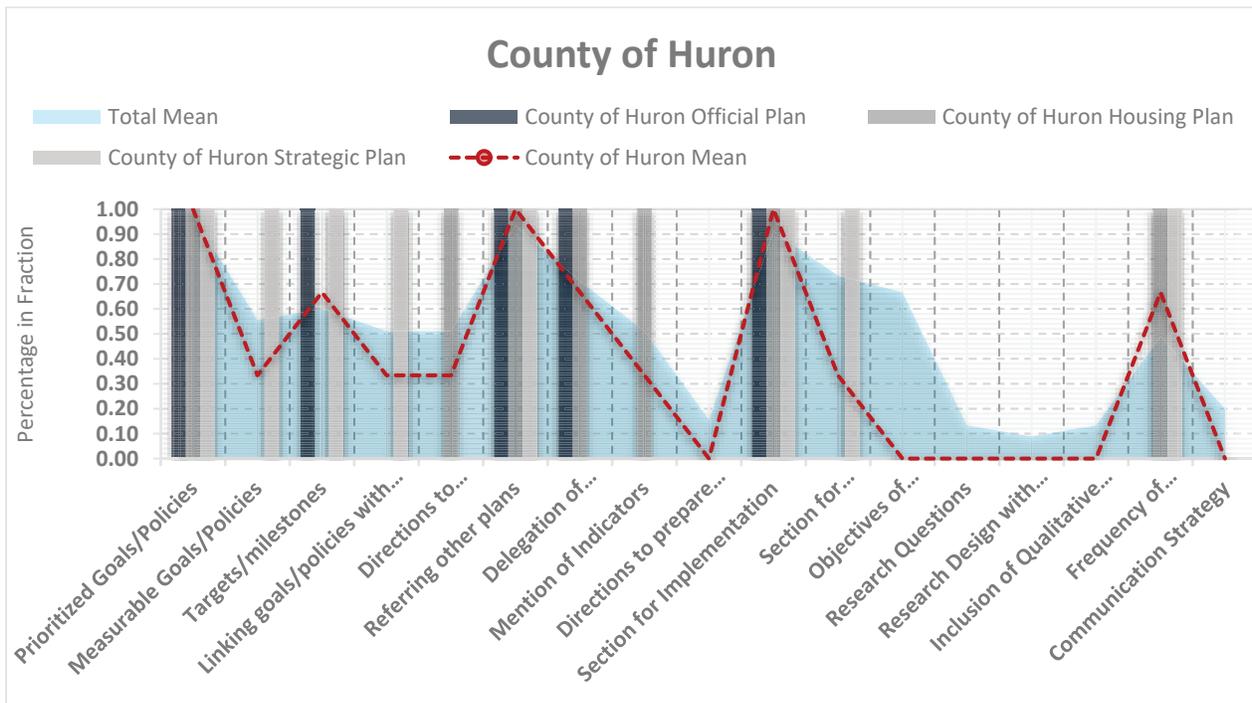


Figure 4.20 County of Huron Individual Municipality-wise Result

Further, Figure 4.20 suggests poor performance with just one parameter of the County's percentage above the mean of all the plans – frequency of monitoring/evaluation.

Table 4.17 County of Huron Scores and Ranking

Municipality	Official Plans		Housing Plans		Strategic Plans		All the Plans	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
County of Huron	1.88	12.00	3.13	8.00	5.00	3.00	3.33	11.00

4.3 Chapter Summary

In summary, Chapter 4 portrays the results generated from both the qualitative and quantitative segments of this research. Under the qualitative segment, the thematic patterns are identified. Under the quantitative segment, the study portrays the scores and ranks for each municipality, following which the results are depicted from both the perspective, that is, from the perspective of parameters (factors), and from the perspective of the municipalities.

5 Synthesis, Conclusion and Recommendation

This section synthesizes the results and observations derived from the research and gives final conclusion and recommendations with identifying some of the best practices followed by municipalities. At last, the section also provides directions for further research.

Before synthesizing the results, it is important to review the objectives and limitations of this research to not interpret the results incorrectly. This research aims to understand the quality of plans from the perspective of monitoring and evaluation. The parameters (factors) were identified to check their presence (or absence) within a plan to understand the plan's quality from the standpoint of monitoring and evaluation. It is not intended to pinpoint any municipality, so the research does not synthesize specific and individual examples by focusing on a particular municipality in general. The research just synthesizes the overall result generated as the outcome of the content analysis exercise performed.

Further, without sufficient research and correlational studies, it must not be inferred that the plans with a low score on the content analysis do not practice or implement the policies efficiently. There is no correlation between the plan/policies and the actions/implementation as both are mutually exclusive research areas. And from the literature review, no sufficient evidence to correlate the quality of plans with the extent of implementation was found.

Another importance consideration is that the literature lacks studies that correlate the budget allocation to an individual municipality and the level of plan monitoring and evaluation practice. Monetary allocation of funds towards plan monitoring and evaluation is an important parameter on which the monitoring and evaluation framework can flourish. So, it should not be inferred that the municipalities with low plan quality scores do not intend to have a robust plan monitoring and evaluation framework in place. If the municipalities have no budget allocation towards plan monitoring and evaluation, then it is unlikely that the framework on evaluation can flourish. The intend of this study was limited to determine the present quality of plans. So, no other inferences should be made based on the quality of the plans.

At times, the reports on annual updates or monitoring and evaluation are presented in the Council's staff meetings and not published on the website. This reduces the chances for the public in general or researchers to review the updates on the progress. The study tried to include the available reports from the database of agendas and minutes. However, it was not possible to find all the reports (not plans but reports) that fall under the framework selected for analysis under this study.

In the case of two parameters, organizational responsibility and allocation of the resources it was observed that all the plans and reports would not include the details. However, this does not mean that these parameters are absent. The nature of the parameters, mostly municipalities, identifies the organizational structure and the budget specific to plan monitoring and evaluation internally. So, these parameters were excluded from the analysis as their low score will not specifically help to conclude the absence of these parameters.

Finally, the research has considered just a segment of plans from the entire planning framework given the limitations of time and scope. Plans on the environment, transportation, growth management and development, and other long-term plans like vision statements and ten to twenty years-long strategic plans are excluded from the study. However, further research can be conducted specifically on a municipality basis to dive deeper into the specifics of all the plans and reports within the planning framework of an individual municipality.

In terms of the structure, the chapter first synthesises the thematic patterns derived as an outcome from the qualitative segment of this study, the second section synthesises all the parameters for plans and reports used to conduct the content analysis, and the final section integrates all the findings into the major findings as the final takeover from the study.

5.1 Thematic Synthesis of Prevalent Patterns

5.1.1 Individual Themes

Absence of measurable policies with identified targets, timelines, and milestones.

The goals, objectives and policies in these plans have not been drafted to be readily evaluated. The plan is not written with measurement in mind, and the plans are devoid of targets and/or milestones that could help measure progress consistently over the reporting period. Open-ended, very general plan statement cannot provide clear direction on what to measure and how to measure. Vague plan statements can lead to subjective interpretation, rather than evidence-based decision-making which is essential for effective planning.

In the cases where the policies have provided directions to monitor/evaluate, it was observed that the policy drafters tend to use terms such as “might” instead of “will.” “Might” sometimes offers discretion as to whether a plan monitoring and evaluation framework should and designed and implemented. This is a less than satisfactory approach because it means that plan monitoring would likely not take place.

The main policies lack connections or links with the monitoring and evaluation process. However, in the majority of cases, the framework for plan monitoring and evaluation was absent.

In most plans, the connections between the goals, objectives and were not integrated with the plan monitoring and evaluation section. Plan chapters provided details about what should happen, how it should happen, what should be done and what should not be done. However, it is quite astonishing to find that the plans missed an important opportunity to assess whether outcomes and impacts corresponded with plan intentions. We are reminded that integration of monitoring and evaluation should be considered a crucial element in these plans.

The majority of the plans and reports lack proper directions about how monitoring and evaluation should be conducted.

In most municipalities, the plans could not explain how plan monitoring and evaluation should take place. Instead, I found expressions of interest and a commitment to design and implement a plan monitoring and evaluation process, but no details about how this would take place. In other words, most municipalities offered aspirational statements instead of firm commitments supported by detailed plan monitoring and evaluation processes.

Municipal plans and strategies should be connected horizontally and vertically.

As a general principle, it is good practice to achieve internal consistency among various municipal plans and strategy documents. Further, it makes sense to use findings generated by plan monitoring and evaluation to inform the contents and implementation of other municipal plans, and vice versa. In other words, plan monitoring and evaluation should not occur in a vacuum.

Many plans talked about identifying the indicators. However, a handful of plans have identified indicators and have analyzed plan implementation in accordance with those indicators.

Very few of these plans and reports have identified indicators needed to support plan monitoring and evaluation. As Stevens (2013) and Seasons (2021) noted, along with other researchers on plan monitoring and evaluation, indicators are the building blocks of a jigsaw puzzle named monitoring, which eventually makes evaluation possible to optimize and align (realign) the planning interventions with the plans/policies.

In reality, a handful of plans have given directions on the preparation of indicators, and a handful of reports have utilized those indicators to monitor the progress. Only three municipalities provided directions on the preparation of indicators, identified the indicators, and utilized these indicators in their progress update reports. Further, no municipality has identified the indicators simultaneously with the plan-making process and has integrated the monitoring and evaluation of the indicators with the plan's timeline.

None of the plans have classified the indicators from different interest-groups perspective.

Indicators have the potential to be identified from the user/stakeholder perspectives to help different interest groups improve decision-making and buy-in to the plan making and implementation process. This helps every set of interest group with decisions and eventually helps to gain the trust (eventually acceptance) of all the stakeholders in the plan monitoring and evaluation process. However, none of the plans or reports have identified the indicators from the perspective of different interests' group.

The majority of all the plans and reports have exclusive sections for monitoring and evaluation. However, the majority of all the plans have just described the benefits and needs to conduct monitoring and evaluation, delegated the task to monitor and evaluate by preparing the reports, and in some cases, provided the frequencies to prepare the reports.

The majority of the plans have identified an exclusive section for implementation and monitoring/evaluation. Under the plan implementation section, the plans talk about different planning tools available under the Planning Act to execute the goals, objectives and policies in the plan. The section typically provides detailed directions for implementation.

In the case of monitoring and evaluation, the majority of the plans identified the benefits that the monitoring and evaluation can deliver, provided frequencies for monitoring and evaluation either based on the provincial mandate or some generic timeline, identified different aspects of the plan that would need to be monitored, and finally, delegates and transfer the task to monitor and evaluate to reports and other plans.

When comparing best practices in plan monitoring and evaluation with the municipalities studied in this research, I found significant gaps between the ideal and the practice reality in these municipalities. For example, best practices involve the identification of indicators in the plans and directions to utilize the indicators in subsequent reports (three municipalities have done this), provision of detailed checklists of what needs to be done under the monitoring and evaluation (one municipality has done this) and connecting back to individual sections with details on monitoring and evaluation (three municipalities have done this).

Best practices also recommend the creation of a committee to deal with plan monitoring and evaluation (one municipality has done this), creating live dashboards that portray real-time progress against identified parameters/indicators (two municipalities have done this), and finally, preparation of an evaluation program that not only deals with the monitoring and evaluation of an individual plan, but connects with all the plans within the municipality along with provision of directions to other local municipalities to conduct plan monitoring and evaluation in a similar fashion (one municipality has done this).

In summary, some municipalities have begun to think and act on plan monitoring and evaluation. However, other municipalities are falling behind in terms of plan monitoring and evaluation. This certainly needs intervention in the form of education, awareness, and capacity building. So, the municipalities already working on monitoring and evaluation can improve, and those not working can start working on it.

There is a need to clearly explain evaluation-related research questions

Research questions are crucial to develop an approach based on which the indicators can be prepared, data can be collected, and the data that can be analyzed. Research questions help to decide the approach and research design on which the monitoring and evaluation can happen. However, only three municipalities identified research questions in conjunction with indicators to monitor and analyze the planning interventions. Further, the evaluation supportive research design was not explained in any of the municipalities. Again, this seems to be a matter of awareness, education, and attitude towards plan monitoring and evaluation approach.

Only the Region of York has talked about using a qualitative approach in their plan, and a handful of reports have either talked about using or actually utilized the qualitative approach.

Another important aspect of plan monitoring and evaluation is to provide equal importance to the qualitative segment of research design and methods. Under the typical current approach, almost all the plans and reports have focused upon identifying quantitative results that can demonstrate the performance. However, the quantitative approach alone cannot address the underlying reasons that either hinder or facilitate the implementation of a particular policy. This can only be derived by integrating the quantitative with the qualitative approach.

There is a need to create and manage an effective communication strategy to support evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation alone will not serve the purpose. What has been derived as an output from the process needs to be communicated with the audience to value the process. If the results derived are consistently delivered and communicated to all the stakeholder groups having

different sets of interest, and if the delivered results are helping the stakeholders to make informed decisions, thereby increasing the transparency and credibility of the planning interventions, then the stakeholders may value the plan monitoring and evaluation process. So, the value and power of communicating findings from the plan monitoring and evaluation process should never be ignored. It is the final steppingstone that completes the plan monitoring and evaluation process.

However, only a handful of plans mentioned about communicating evaluation results, with not a single plan or report with stakeholder-oriented results. This clearly portrays the lack of importance given to communicating the results and the plan monitoring and evaluation process in general. Thus, there is an immediate need to create awareness in the form of education and capacity building.

Reporting evaluation findings need to emphasize implications and consequences

It was observed that irrespective of that plan had asked the reports to prepare and identify; in some cases, the report will only portray the changes or actions in the given time. Thus, the report will altogether miss the results, findings, and recommendations as an output of the plan monitoring and evaluation process. As mentioned above, there is no system of conformity to check whether the reports are created consistently and are the reports delivering the expected results from the plans.

Uneven access to plan monitoring and evaluation reports jeopardizes transparency and accountability.

Some municipalities have provided all the reports on their websites, while others have published them on the Council's agendas and meeting portals. Different municipalities have different ways of uploading the reports on the Council's agendas and meetings, making it difficult to get all the reports consistently. Given the lack of a uniform, understandable system for document access and retrieval, there is considerable room for misunderstanding.

The policies on monitoring and evaluation are not drafted during the plan-making process.

It is clear in most cases that the plan monitoring and evaluation policies are not drafted at the same time the plans are drafted. This leads to a gap between the plan policies and the policies on plan monitoring and evaluation, which gets utmost difficult and tedious to address in the later stage of planning. Many of the challenges associated with plan monitoring and evaluation can be handled by integrating plan monitoring and evaluation with the plan-making process. When the planners draft plans, they need to establish the mechanism with which those policies can be monitored and evaluated.

As a result, the planners would not have an informed understanding of what worked and what did not work when implementing the plan. If an efficient plan monitoring and evaluation process is not established in parallel with the plan-making process, then eventually, the plans won't be able to achieve the desired results. My sense is that the fundamental flaw is the misconception of the plan monitoring and evaluation as a component of the plans and not as a process that needs to run in conjunction with the plan-making process.

Further, based on the review hardly any municipality has talked about preparation of timeline with goals, targets and milestones mentioned. This depicts the lack of importance towards preparation of timeline that again is a fundamental component of plan monitoring and evaluation. If the timeline is absent there is no possibility to connect the frequencies of monitoring, evaluation, and intervention with the plans' timeline, targets, and milestones. As a result, a robust plan monitoring and evaluation framework parallel to the plan implementation process cannot be created.

This means that municipalities should identify the problems under different segments of planning cannon, develop research questions to address those problems, identifies a research approach with identified research methods, establishes the frequencies to collect data and to analyze the collected data, the time intervals for interventions to make changes to realign the policies, actions with goals/visions, check the alignment, and finally combines this approach with the timeline and targets/milestones established.

Provincial intervention has a positive effect on plan quality in terms of monitoring and evaluation.

Two major observations were derived that helped to determine some influence of provincial mandate on the plan quality in terms of monitoring and evaluation. Firstly, in the case of Official Plans, the majority of the plans have drafted measurable policies with targets for intensification, employment, and jobs, affordable housing, transit-oriented development, growth and development targets in different land use designations, source water protection targets, forest cover targets, open space, and parklands, and finally cycling and parking infrastructure in few cases. However, beyond these aspects, there are hardly any policies that are measurable with targets. The reason is that the Province has mandated that Official Plans should identify targets and a timeline to achieve those targets for the areas mentioned above. However, the Province is silent regarding guidelines for plan monitoring and evaluation.

Secondly, in a comparison between the Official Plans and housing plans in terms of plan monitoring and evaluation, on average, housing plans performed better than the Official Plans. The reason behind this observation is the provincial mandate to prepare plans with identification of action items, methods to measure and monitor the progress and to prepare reports annually to demonstrate the results. These observations suggest that the Province has at least some form of influence over the plan quality and over the plan monitoring and evaluation process being implemented by the municipalities.

Key differences observed between Official Plans, Housing Plans, and Strategic Plans.

The primary intent of selecting the housing plan was to check the influence of provincial mandate on plan monitoring and evaluation, and the intent of selecting the strategic plan was to check the influence of political will on the quality of plan monitoring and evaluation, as the Council in power prepares the strategic plans. As mentioned in the previous theme, the housing plans performed better than the Official Plans in terms of plan monitoring and evaluation given the provincial mandate on housing plans, and observations have derived the expected results.

However, in the case of the strategic plans, the results that emerged out are quite the opposite compared to the expected results. On average, strategic plans performed worst compared to the housing and Official Plans in terms of monitoring and evaluation. There can be several reasons behind this observation. However, it can be speculated that the strategic plans have more focus on demonstration and presentation rather than going into details of plan monitoring and evaluation. Another reason can be that few municipalities have combined the strategic plans with the priorities of Official Plans and other secondary plans like housing plans, transportation plans, and environmental plans to name some. Under such scenarios, the strategic plans act like a plan demonstrating that the Council's priorities align with the priorities of Official Plans and other secondary plans. However, based on this research's scope, solid reasons behind this observation cannot be made.

5.2 Parameter (factors) Synthesis for Plans

5.2.1 Prioritized Goals/Policies

Key Findings and Conclusions

Qualitatively, this aspect is present in almost all the plans, irrespective of whether priorities are open-ended or bounded by time and target. All the plans have successfully identified priorities. Thus, all the municipalities are on track with successfully identifying the directions in which the implementation should happen. The question is whether the policies are measurable with targets assigned. The percentage for all the plans is 0.98, which implies that all the 45 plans reviewed have identified priorities within their policies.

Recommendations

Identification of the priorities to guide or direct the actions is the first step of the plan-making process. Rather than just providing open-ended policies, efforts should be made to introduce measurable goals, objectives and policies with output and outcome targets where possible. To track the achievement and alignment of targets, a monitoring and evaluation framework should be introduced at the same time as the plan-making process.

5.2.2 Measurable Goals/Policies

Key Findings and Conclusions

I found that the municipalities do not draft measurable policies consistently. Most of the policies found are open-ended policies, with no clear directions on measuring the progress achieved and checking the progress's alignment with the policies. Not only the Official Plans but also the housing and strategic plans lacked specific details about how to measure progress in the plan.

If the policies are vague and open-ended with no specifics on tracking and measuring progress and alignment, it can affect implementing such policies. In the absence of these specifics, the consequences on implementation can be a lack of motivation, subjective interpretation for individual interests, improper use of public resources, lack of effectiveness of the plan, and finally, uncontrollable development with improper distribution of the implementation outcomes. Within this sample, close to half of all the plans have not drafted the measurable policies, so the impact of this on implementation should be huge. The percentage of all the plans is 0.56, which means 56 percent of all the plans have measurable policies, and again there is a significant variation in results amongst all the plans.

Recommendations

With regard to measurement of progress, every effort should be made to write goals, objectives and policies to be measurable. As mentioned in the literature review, if a monitoring and evaluation framework is developed parallel with the planning hierarchy, then irrespective of the plans, all the actions and their alignment can continuously be monitored to optimize the monitoring process.

5.2.3 Targets and/or Milestones

Key Findings and Conclusions

In most cases in this study, all the measurable policies with targets established are limited to intensification, affordable housing, and density targets in specific land use designations. Since

these aspects reflect provincial mandates, all the municipalities have identified targets in these areas. However, very few municipalities have established targets in areas other than the areas of provincial mandate. Further, there is no single municipality with measurable goals/policies and targets set up for all aspects of planning within the plans. On the same note, the percentage of all the plans is 0.60.

As Guyadeen (2017) mentioned about the impact of the provincial mandate on planning, it is clear that because of the provincial mandate to establish targets for density, intensification, and other aspects, most plans set up targets only on those aspects leaving others untouched. So, Provincial mandate/guidelines indeed have some level of impact on the planning policies and framework.

However, several other factors also run in parallel with the provincial mandate, as Seasons (2003) identified in his study - like availability of resources, organizational attitude and culture, and skilled labor availability, to name some. Without clarifying time horizons and targets, it is quite challenging to increase efficiency, as their absence will not optimize the actions to achieve the targets.

Recommendations

The Province should intervene to efficiently guide and direct municipalities to establish a robust monitoring and evaluation framework. If a monitoring and evaluation framework is established in conjunction with the plan-making process, then the policies with targets can be integrated with the timeline of those plan policies themselves.

Finally, if clear communication is maintained, irrespective of whether the targets are achieved or not, the situations that either helped to achieve (or not achieve) the targets can be identified. And in the latter case, where the targets are not achieved, this can be seen as an opportunity to improve, rather than considering it as a failure.

5.2.4 Linking Goals/Policies with Monitoring/Evaluation

Key Findings and Conclusions

The parameters sought a connection of the goals, objectives and policies with the monitoring and evaluation process. I found that some plans have provided the directions to monitor and evaluate within the section of action policies and then linked them to the overall monitoring framework. In contrast, other plans have directly delegated/transferred the task to monitor and evaluate to the section on monitoring and evaluation. In some rare cases, it was observed that the plans are structured in the form of a matrix, wherein action policies and the monitoring and evaluation framework run parallel all across the plans. Irrespective of the variant that a plan follows to link the policies with monitoring and evaluation, it is essential to link the plan goals, objectives and policies with the monitoring framework.

With regard to study findings, the percentage of all the plans is 0.51; the housing plans (percentage 0.80) outperformed both the strategic (percentage 0.27) and official (percentage 0.47) plans. This means that only half of all the plans link the goals/policies with monitoring and evaluation.

Recommendations

It should be understood that to connect the policies with a monitoring and evaluation framework, at first, a framework should be established. If a monitoring and evaluation framework is established with the plan-making process, then as the goals, objectives and policies are drafted, the connection can be made with the monitoring and evaluation framework. And then, the monitoring and evaluation process identified for those policies can easily be connected with the section on monitoring and evaluation policies.

This approach will create solid linkages and help establish a robust monitoring and evaluation framework, as the connections are made at the same time when the policies are drafted. Unlike the situation, wherein all the policies are drafted, and then some random form of monitoring and evaluation is established. The idea here is to understand that the monitoring and evaluation framework should not be considered an individual section that is isolated in the plans. Instead, it should be considered an integral part of the plan-making process with its presence in all the segments of the plans.

5.2.5 Directions to Monitor/Evaluate

Key Findings and Conclusions

Specifically, there are two topics to consider - first, after giving the directions on monitoring and evaluation, the entire task is delegated to other plans; second, the plans include both the directions and details of monitoring and evaluation. It is important to note that the content analysis exercise adopted the binary scoring method, so the extent to which the directions are provided cannot be identified within this study. However, as per qualitative observations, very few plans have provided thorough/complete monitoring and evaluation directions, as would expect to see as best practices (addressed in the literature review).

The percentage of all the plans is 0.51; the housing plans (percentage 0.67) performed better compared to Official Plans (percentage 0.53) and strategic plans (percentage 0.33). It can be inferred that only half of all the plans have provided directions to monitor and evaluate. This means 50 percent of the plans are created without giving specific directions on plan monitoring and evaluation. This shows the lack of importance given to this aspect of monitoring and evaluation.

Further, it can be concluded, at least to some extent, that there is some impact of the provincial mandate on the quality of plans from the perspective of monitoring and evaluation based on the better results of housing plans (percentage 0.67) as compared to Official Plans (percentage 0.53) and strategic plans (percentage 0.33) cluster.

Recommendations

The absence of directions to monitor and evaluate in half of all the plans is worrisome. This suggests a lack of importance given to this aspect of the plan monitoring and evaluation. To have challenges to monitor and evaluate with implementation is one thing, but not giving directions to monitor and evaluate the policies at the time of the plan-making process is something that needs immediate attention. It should clearly be noted that without a sound monitoring and

evaluation process established at the time of the plan-making process, no planner will be able to certainly answer that why the policies are unable to generate the desired outcomes.

Thus, it is highly recommended to integrate monitoring and evaluation within the plan-making process. The idea is to start with whatever is possible within available resources, as things will eventually evolve. If the targets are achieved or not is the second question, the first question is "why" the policies were able or unable to achieve the targets or desired outcomes. And only a sound monitoring and evaluation process can answer this "why"? question.

5.2.6 Referring to other Plans and Delegation of Monitoring/Evaluation

Key Findings and Conclusions

Referring and connecting the policies with other plans undoubtedly increases internal cohesion. However, the flip side in monitoring and evaluation is that there are changes of delegating the task of monitoring and evaluation to the lower-level plans, which has been the case as discussed in the delegation of monitoring/evaluation parameter mentioned below. The percentage of all the plans is 0.93. Thus, almost all the plans have referred the policies to other relevant plans with slight variance. The percentages of all the plans fall within the same range, with strategic plans slightly below the other two plans.

In contrast, for delegation of monitoring/evaluation parameter, the percentage of all the plans is 0.71; the Official Plans outperformed the parameter with 1.00 as the percentage, followed by the housing plans at 0.67 percentage and strategic plans at 0.47 percentage. This means all the 15 Official Plans reviewed have delegated the task to monitor and evaluate other plans.

Qualitatively, it was observed in some cases, the delegation of monitoring and evaluation becomes a leeway from the responsibility of monitoring and evaluation. Delegation of tasks is essential but constructively. All the plans should design and describe the monitoring and evaluation process and then refer (or delegate) the tasks that are beyond the scope of that particular plans. Another observation made was that some plans delegate the task to monitor

and evaluate internally by preparing regular internal staff reports during the Council meetings. Referring to these plans is beyond this study's scope.

Thus, almost all the plans have successfully referred to other relevant lower-level and upper-level policies. This is a good thing as it increases the internal cohesion amongst the entire planning policies framework. However, there is a thin line between referring the policies with other policies and delegating the task to other policies. Based on the results from the delegation of monitoring/evaluation parameter, it is evident that the plans tend to delegate the task to monitor and evaluate to other plans (especially high-level plans to lower-level plans). Thus, this is a loophole that must be addressed at the time of the plan-making process, as it distorts the entire hierarchy of plan monitoring and evaluation framework, if any.

Recommendations

Referring to and delegating the tasks in a way is an essential component of high-quality plans. However, the argument here is that delegating the entire responsibility of monitoring and evaluation is not ideal. As mentioned above, this suggests a lack of importance has been given to the plan monitoring and evaluation process.

Notwithstanding the past research recommendations, including this research, to integrate plan monitoring and evaluation with the plan-making process, the question here evolved to be of the importance given to monitoring and evaluation. Until the attitude towards the monitoring and evaluation process changes, the monitoring and evaluation process's integration with the plan-making process will remain a difficult process.

So, it is recommended to either have some form of Provincial intervention that compels and guides the municipalities to integrate monitoring and evaluation with the plan-making process. As well, there is an immediate need to educate the current planners about the importance of the plan monitoring and evaluation process.

5.2.7 Mention of Indicators and Directions to prepare Indicators

Key Findings and Conclusions

As mentioned in the literature review, appropriate indicators are fundamental to track the progress and keep the actions aligned to derive the outcomes as desired by the policies. However, the actuality is that more than half of all the plans amongst the biggest municipalities in Ontario have not mentioned the importance of indicators or the need to prepare indicators.

In all the plans that acknowledged indicators, only 16 percent have given directions to prepare the indicators, of which only three municipalities have inculcated the indicators in their plan monitoring and evaluation framework. This result clearly portrays the lack of importance and awareness regarding the plan monitoring and evaluation process. Thus, it is evident that the current state of plan monitoring is quite far from the ideal plan monitoring and evaluation approach as identified by research.

The percentage of all the plans in the case of mention of indicators parameter is 0.51. So, half of all the plans have acknowledged the importance of indicators and have mentioned them in their plans. On the other hand, almost half of all the plans have not even mentioned about the indicators. Identifying them is altogether a different matter. It is important to note that this parameter just checks whether the plans have mentioned indicators.

For the directions to prepare parameter, all the plans' percentage is 0.16. The Official Plans (percentage 0.20) and housing plans (percentage 0.20) performed better compared to the strategic plans (percentage 0.07). Thus, less than one-fifth of all the plans have given directions about how to prepare the indicators. And based on qualitative observations, only three municipalities have identified the indicators close to the ideal case scenario - the City of Toronto, Region of Peel and Region of York. Of the other municipalities which give directions to prepare indicators, very few have created the indicators. The municipalities that identified the indicators have identified them for some particular aspect of planning and have not integrated indicators as part of the entire plan monitoring and evaluation framework.

Recommendations

Ideally, indicators are to be identified in conjunction with drafting the policies for different segments of the plan. As mentioned above, if the plan monitoring and evaluation process is integrated with the plan-making process, then as the set of goals, objectives and policies for a section are drafted, the way it can be monitored and evaluated can be identified along with identifying the indicators. Taken together, these indicators will act as the building blocks of the entire plan monitoring and evaluation framework.

Further, developing indicators is a process of continuously learning. Given the highly dynamic nature of planning, the indicators will be subject to updates, but the idea here is to start by identifying basic indicators and then building upon those indicators. The outcome generated by these indicators can then be presented and classified in different ways for different interest groups or stakeholders. So, the process of plan monitoring and evaluation will not be limited to the planning department but will also attract the entire pool of stakeholders. And this is an essential step in building trust towards the plan monitoring and evaluation process. (This is recommended, but no municipality has done this up till now). Finally, it is recommended to create awareness about the importance of plan monitoring and evaluation amongst the existing planners and start with the basic planning monitoring and evaluation.

5.2.8 Section for Implementation

Key Findings and Conclusions

It was observed that most of the Official Plans under this section have discussed planning tools provided under the Planning Act (1990) and have given directions on implementing different policies in different scenarios. Other plans have combined implementation policies from across the entire plan under the section of implementation. Irrespective of the case, most of the municipalities have provided separate section for plan implementation.

However, in some cases, it was observed that instead of giving directions on implementation, the plans are stating action items that should happen under the implementation section. In such

plans, the line between the directions to implement the policies and prepare a list of action items has been erased. Clear directions on implementing the diverse pool of policies drastically enhance the clarity and help implement the policies. Based on the results, more or less, all the plans have provided specific sections for implementing the policies. However, the extent to which the section on implementation clarifies the policies is a different question.

Statistically, the percentage of all the plans is 0.91. All three plans percentages also fall within the same range of results, with Official Plans (percentage 1.00) and housing plans (percentage 1.00) ahead of the strategic plans (percentage 0.73).

The extent of presence or absence of a parameter indirectly portrays the importance of that parameters in the minds of the plan makers and the Council that approves it. So, it can be concluded that both the planners and Councilors give importance to have exclusive policies on implementation. Thus, the next question which arises is, are the planners and the Councilors giving equal importance to plan monitoring and evaluation?

Recommendations

In the section for implementation, almost all the plans are at par with the results. The only aspect that needs attention is maintaining distance between the policies that provide guidance or directions on implementation and the list of action items or tasks, as observed in some plans, especially the strategic plans followed by the housing plans, with no Official Plans.

5.2.9 Section for Monitoring/Evaluation

Key Findings and Conclusions

It was observed that the majority of the plans have only provided objectives of monitoring and evaluation, frequencies to conduct an update, delegation of the process to other reports like annual or staff reports, and few details on monitoring and tracking the provincially mandated aspects like density targets, intensification, affordable housing, and transit-oriented development.

Very few plans have identified the entire framework on plan monitoring and evaluation and then have provided the policies on monitoring and evaluation in conjugation with the framework established. Thus, the section for monitoring and evaluation based on the observations seems to be used as a place to mention the importance or objectives of monitoring, in some cases the frequencies, and finally delegation to other plans and policies. Hence, the section in most of the plans is quite far from the ideal plan monitoring and evaluation framework as identified in this research.

Statistically, the percentage of all the plans is 0.73. The Official Plans (percentage 0.93) performed the best when compared with the housing plans (percentage 0.80) and the strategic plans (percentage 0.47).

Ideally, the primary intent of the section for monitoring and evaluation is to give clear details on the monitoring and evaluation framework established. This includes identification of objectives of monitoring and evaluation process, developing research questions, identifying the research design with methods (including identification of indicators), identification of frequencies for monitoring and evaluation, and finally setting up a communication strategy to disclose the outcomes of the exercise periodically to all the stakeholders.

Recommendations

Lack of importance and awareness about the ideal plan monitoring and evaluation has resulted in a state wherein the plan's monitoring and evaluation section just touches upon few aspects of the plan implementation and evaluation process, with delegation of the entire task in some cases. Moreover, there are often no measures defined to check whether the delegated task is being executed or not.

This holds true because, in the absence of the pre-defined plan monitoring and evaluation framework, the work has to be delegated to be dealt with in most cases in the future. And since things get too complicated later on, a robust monitoring and evaluation mechanism is not developed. Finally, some sort of partial monitoring and evaluation is carried out at the best of

the capability to find out the trends, patterns, and in some cases, the reasons for successes and failures.

As recommended in the above parameters, this is not an ideal approach towards plan monitoring and evaluation. Thus, it is again recommended that efforts should be made to integrate plan monitoring and evaluation with the plan-making process. And to start with just a basic form of monitoring and evaluation, which can be developed eventually as and when time and resources permit.

5.2.10 Objectives of Monitoring/Evaluation and Research Questions

Key Findings and Conclusions

Close to two-third of all the plans have identified the plan monitoring and evaluation objectives. However, as per the close observation, most of the plans have just mentioned the importance of plan monitoring and evaluation in general. Very few plans have identified the actual objectives that describe what the entire framework is about and what it tries to generate as the output. The percentage of all the plans is 0.67. Similar to the section for monitoring and evaluation, the Official Plans performed the best (percentage 0.87), followed by the housing plans cluster (percentage 0.67) and finally, the strategic plans cluster (percentage 0.47).

It is essential to have clarity on key objectives of the plan monitoring and evaluation process, as this is the stage wherein the framework on monitoring and evaluation will develop the research questions and research design to meet the objectives by answering these research questions.

In the case of research questions, the percentage of all the plans is 0.13. This means that only 13 percent of all the plans have identified research questions. More or less, all three plans fall within the same range of results with the Official Plans on the bottom (percentage 0.07).

It should be noted that even if the research questions are identified for just a section of the entire plan, the content analysis will consider that the plan has identified the research questions. So, the extent and the relevance of the research questions identified are not answered within this study. The connection between the research questions and the entire plan monitoring and

evaluation framework is questionable. As observed in some plans (especially the strategic plans and housing plans), even though the research questions have been identified, the entire framework for plan monitoring and evaluation that these research questions should connect to is missing.

The results clearly portray that hardly any plans have identified the research questions from ideal plan monitoring and evaluation perspective. Further, these results were expected as without having clarity on the approach, without integrating the monitoring process with the plan-making process, and without identifying precise objectives (as what exactly the policies intend to achieve and how can these achievements be monitored and evaluated regularly), it is not possible to identify research questions.

Recommendations

The way in which plan monitoring and evaluation are approached in the current planning regime will undoubtedly lead to such results, wherein very few plans know the actual purpose or objectives of plan monitoring and evaluation. If there is no clarity about the purpose of monitoring and evaluation, it is not possible to identify research questions and research design to meet the objectives. This result shows that plan monitoring and evaluation is not practiced parallel with plan-making in most cases. As, if that is not the case, then for all the set of policies drafted, the type of monitoring and evaluation required would have been identified with clear identification of the objectives. Thus, it is highly recommended to run plan monitoring and evaluation processes in parallel with the plan-making process to avoid most of the drawbacks identified in this research.

5.2.11 Research Design with Research Methods

Key Findings and Conclusions

An important observation made was the affinity of plan makers to use "might" instead of "will" or "must." The majority of the policies are drafted in a manner that keeps the door open for selective interpretation. Of the few plan policies that are close to some aspects of ideal plan

monitoring and evaluation practice, the use of "might" instead of "will" reduces the probability of executing the aspects of plan monitoring and evaluation drastically.

The percentage of all the plans is 0.09. This means only less than five plans of 45 plans have identified research design and methods. Again, whether the entire plan monitoring and evaluation framework is established or not is questionable. This is just the case wherein the plans have provided a description of the research design and methods to be implemented as a part of the monitoring and evaluation process. Such a low result clearly portrays the quality of the plans from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation. As well, the attitude of the planners and plan-makers towards the importance of plan monitoring and evaluation.

Recommendations

Research design and the methods identified within the research design are crucial for the existence of any robust plan monitoring and evaluation mechanism. The absence of the research design with methods in almost all the plans clearly portrays that there is hardly any municipality that practices plan monitoring and evaluation in the manner it should be.

A fundamental change towards to plan monitoring and evaluation is crucial to at least implement the policies in such a way that the desired outcomes are achieved. Otherwise, the process is like designing excellent policies with no importance given to whether the policies are being implemented in the manner it was supposed to. And then, after some time again designing the policies in the hope that desired results will be generated this time, it will not be possible to generate the desired result. This vicious loop will keep on going until robust monitoring and evaluation approach is integrated. Ideal policies with no proper monitoring and evaluation framework will not bring the desired outcomes. Still, normal policies with ideal monitoring and evaluation mechanism will undoubtedly bring the outcomes as desired.

5.2.12 Inclusion of Qualitative Approach/Methods

Key Findings and Conclusions

A handful of the plans have utilized the qualitative aspect within their plan monitoring and evaluation framework. The rest of all the plans have just mentioned or delegated the task to include qualitative aspects of plan monitoring and evaluation. Another important observation is that a pattern of decrement in the mean all the way from the section for implementation to the qualitative approach/methods is observed. This means that a decrement in the quality of plans is observed as the analysis gets deeper into the individual components of the plan monitoring and evaluation process.

The qualitative aspect is equally important as the quantitative aspect. The qualitative aspect helps to identify the practical on-ground implications of implementing the policies. It helps to understand the consequences of the actions and decisions made by the planning system. The qualitative aspect is the one that helps to check the alignment of the outcomes with that of the desired outcomes. It further helps update and adjust the plans and policies with changing needs and dynamics of the public and thus helps keep the plan implementation process on track.

The percentage of all the plans is 0.13. As with the three plans, the housing plans performed the best (percentage 0.27), followed by the Official Plans (percentage 0.07) and the strategic plans (percentage 0.07). This means that only 13 percent of all the plans have included or given directions for some form of the qualitative aspect of plan monitoring and evaluation. The extent to which the plans have included the qualitative aspects and whether the delegated task on the qualitative aspect is executed is questionable.

Recommendations

A general trend to give importance to the numbers is observed. At times, the planners get so occupied with getting the numbers right, the actual implications and consequences that the implementation of the policies has resulted are neglected. Without integrating the qualitative aspect of plan monitoring and evaluation, the actual outcomes that the policies desired will be difficult to achieve. As planning is the field of great uncertainty and change, it is highly recommended to integrate the qualitative aspect of plan monitoring and evaluation so that the

underlying implications of the implementation actions can be realized and mitigated if required to achieve the desired outcomes.

5.2.13 Frequency of Monitoring/Evaluation

Key Findings and Conclusions

The percentage of all the plans is 0.49. All three plans fall within the same range of results, with housing plans performing a bit better than the other two plans. This means that half of all the plans have mentioned the frequency for plan updates, monitoring or when to prepare a progress report as a part of plan monitoring. It should be noted that of all the plans frequencies, some have been required under provincial program reporting obligations. As in the case of housing plans, under the Housing Service Act (2011), all the municipalities must prepare an annual update report and present the report to the Council and the ministry. As well, both for Housing and Homelessness Action Plan and the Official Plan, it is the provincial mandate to conduct a comprehensive review to update and align the plans with changing demands every five years.

From a political standpoint, the Council's strategic plans with the prioritized action items are important. The level of accomplishments against these strategic plans forms the basis of their credibility. So, most of the Council strategic plans have identified the frequencies to monitor the progress on the strategic plans periodically. Thus, either because of the provincial mandate or to somehow monitor most of the plans have provided the frequencies to monitor and prepare updates on the plans and policies.

The actual intent of identifying the frequency of monitoring and evaluation is to identify the need for the type of monitoring and evaluation based on the set of policies. Once the monitoring and evaluation process is finalized with the indicators identified, appropriate monitoring and evaluation frequencies can be identified, which might or might not be the same for monitoring and evaluation. However, based on the results and observations, the current planning regime does not identify the frequencies from the standpoint mentioned above.

Further, at the time of identifying parameters, two separate parameters were identified, one for the frequency of monitoring and the other for the frequency of evaluation. However, not even a single plan across all fifteen municipalities has identified separate frequencies for monitoring and evaluation. Thus, this type of result clearly portrays the negligence of the plan makers and planners towards the ideal plan monitoring and evaluation practice.

Recommendations

The purpose of identifying the frequencies of monitoring and evaluation is not because it is the provincial mandate, or it needs to be done. Rather it should be need-based derived from the development of a monitoring and evaluation framework. Thus, again, it is highly recommended to integrate the plan monitoring and evaluation with the plan-making process and identify all these parameters while drafting the policies and developing a monitoring and evaluation framework for those policies.

5.2.14 Communication Strategy

Key Findings and Conclusions

The results derived clearly portray that required attention is not given to formulate a communication strategy that periodically communicates the outcomes derived from the plan monitoring and evaluation process. A step ahead in this process is to design the communication strategy from the perspective of different stakeholders or different interest groups. The underlying result to do so is the same as in the case of classifications of indicators, that is, to deliver tailor-made outcomes for different interest groups. This will help the different stakeholders make improved decision making and have them trust the plan monitoring and evaluation process.

However, the percentage of all the plans is 0.20. Coincidentally, all three plans derived the exact same results. This means that only 20 percent of all the plans have mentioned about developing some form of communication strategy. The extent to which the communication strategy is developed and whether it has been developed in resemblance with the plan monitoring and

evaluation is questionable. The 20 percent entails all the plans, even with partial mention and acknowledgement of the communication strategy.

Recommendations

Effective communication of the results is equally important as conducting plan monitoring and evaluation. Without developing a strategy that communicates the plan monitoring and evaluation outcomes, all the efforts made under plan monitoring and evaluation will go in vain. So, it is highly recommended to give equal importance and consideration to develop a communication strategy as a sub-part or component of the entire plan monitoring and evaluation process/framework (from the perspective of all the stakeholders).

5.3 Parameter (factors) Synthesis for Reports

Key Findings and Conclusions

It should be noted that since different municipalities have different ways to prepare and present the reports, all the reports in conjugation with the plans were not available. Some municipalities provide the reports on the websites, some provide the reports on the Council meetings and agenda serve, whereas some reports are of internal nature. Thus, the reports are not classified under the three segments of Official Plans, strategic plans and housing plans given the lack of availability of all the reports. The reports are content analyzed just to get mere sense of the extent of presence (or absence) of the parameters deemed important for reports from perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation, and direct correlation between the results of plans and reports cannot be made.

It was observed that other than linking the reports with the plans, all the reports performed quite bad from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation. The reports in most cases are mere collection of the updates and actions conducted within the timeframe the reports are prepared for. The actual purpose of the report is to identify the research questions (if not already in the respective plans) that can help to facilitate the implementation by constantly tracking the alignment and performance of the actions. The identification of research questions leads to

preparation of research design which eventually helps to identify research tools in form of methods and indicators.

The reports provide the update and analysis on the results derived from these research methods and indicators and are not a mere place to mention the activities happening. In contrast there were few reports such as in the case of the City of Toronto, Region of Peel, Region of York, City of Hamilton, and City of London that tried to communicate the research aspects for monitoring and evaluation, but in general, the majority of the plans performed poorly under the content analysis exercise.

In all, 97 percent of all the reports have linked the reports with the plans which is the only best result in case of parameters for reports. Only 35 percent of the plans have provided directions on monitoring and evaluation, 19 percent connect to research questions/identify research questions, only 6 percent have identified research design with research methods, 10 percent have included (or mentioned about) some qualitative observations, and 45 percent have derived findings, conclusions, and recommendations. Surprisingly, there is not a single report with a robust strategy to communicate the outcomes derived from the analysis of actions.

Thus, to conclude it should be made clear that the reports are not a place to portray the actions that happened during the respective timeframe; rather, it is the place to portray the results derived from the analysis of the actions in conjunction with the established research design with methods and indicators.

Recommendations

Such results in case of reports are obvious, as in the absence of research questions that leads to preparation of research design, methods and indicators, the reports ought to present some random or partial form of monitoring and evaluation. This further leads to a place where one needs to check the awareness, attitude, capacity, and education amongst the existing and future planners. As with the right attitude, starts the right actions and awareness in form of right education leads to change the attitude. Cumulatively, this leads to gradual capacity building amongst the present and the further planners. Thus, there is an immediate need to draw the

attention of the planners along with other stakeholders towards the importance of plan monitoring and evaluation.

5.4 Final Synthesis, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.4.1 Comparing Official Plans and Housing Plans Results

The primary intent to consider the housing plans and strategic plans were to compare and contrast the quality of these plans with the Official Plans from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation. On the same note, as per Figure 4.1 Overall High Plan Quality Parameter Chart across all the Municipalities and the results derived from the content analysis, it was observed that the strategic plans performed pretty badly compared to the Official Plan and the housing plan. However, the results indicated close competition between the Official Plans and the housing plans, as mentioned in Table 5.1 Comparison between Official Plans and Housing Plans Score Parameter-wise.

The percentage of all the Official Plans is 4.92, whereas it is 5.50 for the housing plans. So, the housing plans performed better than the Official Plans in terms of plan quality from the perspective of monitoring and evaluation. The thesis was hypothesizing on this result because of stringent provincial directions on monitoring and evaluating the housing plans compared to the Official Plans. However, it should be noted that this result implies that there might be some influence of the provincial mandate on the quality of plans from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation. However, the extent to which the provincial mandate correlates with the quality of plans, especially from plan monitoring and evaluation, is subject to further research.

As per Table 5.1 Comparison between Official Plans and Housing Plans Score Parameter-wise, it is clear that the only parameters in which the Official Plans performed better compared to housing plans are prioritized goals/policies, targets/milestones, the section for monitoring/evaluation, objectives of monitoring/evaluation, and finally, research design with research methods. Referring to other plans, directions to prepare indicators, a section for implementation and communication strategy are the parameters in which both the plans

performed equally. In all the other parameters, the housing plans performed better compared to the Official Plans.

Linking goals/policies with monitoring/evaluation, a delegation of monitoring/evaluation, mention of indicators and qualitative approaches/methods are the parameters in which housing plans have performed quite well compared to the Official Plans. Likewise, measurable goals/policies, directions to monitor/evaluate, research questions, and frequency of monitoring/evaluation are the parameters wherein the housing plans outperformed the Official Plans with minor variance. These parameters are more detail-oriented compared to other parameters from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation. These are the very parameters that the Housing Service Act (2011) has asked the municipalities to include in their ten-year housing and homelessness action plan.

Thus, it can be concluded to some extent that the Provincial mandate on plan monitoring and evaluation has clearly some impact on the depth to which the municipalities include the aspects of ideal plan monitoring and evaluation within their plans.

Table 5.1 Comparison between Official Plans and Housing Plans Score Parameter-wise

Sr No	Parameters	Official Plans Score	Housing Plans Score	Plans with a higher score	Difference
1	Prioritized Goals/Policies	1.00	0.93	Official Plans	0.07
2	Measurable Goals/Policies	0.67	0.73	Housing Plans	0.07
3	Targets/milestones	0.80	0.73	Official Plans	0.07
4	Linking goals/policies with monitoring/evaluation	0.47	0.80	Housing Plans	0.33
5	Directions to monitor/evaluate	0.53	0.67	Housing Plans	0.13
6	Referring other plans	1.00	1.00	-	0.00
7	Delegation of monitoring/evaluation	1.00	0.67	Housing Plans	0.33
8	Mention of Indicators	0.47	0.73	Housing Plans	0.27
9	Directions to prepare Indicators	0.20	0.20	-	0.00
10	Section for Implementation	1.00	1.00	-	0.00

Sr No	Parameters	Official Plans Score	Housing Plans Score	Plans with a higher score	Difference
11	Section for Monitoring/Evaluation	0.93	0.80	Official Plans	0.13
12	Objectives of monitoring/evaluation	0.87	0.67	Official Plans	0.20
13	Research Questions	0.07	0.13	Housing Plans	0.07
14	Research Design with Research Methods	0.13	0.00	Official Plans	0.13
15	Qualitative Approach/Methods	0.07	0.27	Housing Plans	0.20
16	Frequency of monitoring/evaluation	0.47	0.60	Housing Plans	0.13
17	Communication Strategy	0.20	0.20	-	0.00

5.4.2 Current State of Plan Quality and Reports Quality from Perspective of Monitoring and Evaluation

Almost all the plans have successfully prioritized the directions by preparing the policies with appropriate directions. However, when it comes to drafting measurable goals/policies with targets, only a bit more than half of the plans has done that. The same result continues for linking the goals/policies with monitoring/evaluation and directions to monitor/evaluate. In contrast, almost all the plans have referred to other relevant plans. However, the flip side here is that there is a fine line between referring to other plans and delegating the entire scope of monitoring and evaluation to other plans. Almost two-thirds of the plans have delegated the task of monitoring and evaluation to other plans, either partial or full.

Further, all the plans performed well in the section for implementation, the section for monitoring/evaluation and objectives for monitoring and evaluation. However, these are subtle aspects of plan monitoring and evaluation. Based on close observation through the lens of qualitative analysis, most of the plans have either provided general directions or have delegated the task of monitoring and evaluation under the section for monitoring. Most of the plans under objectives for monitoring and evaluation generalize the importance of plan monitoring and evaluation. Only a handful of plans have identified plan monitoring and evaluation objectives by identifying the aspects that need to be monitored and tracked using the monitoring practice.

Finally, for all the remaining parameters, research questions, research design with research methods, the inclusion of qualitative approach/methods, frequencies of monitoring/evaluation, and the communication strategy, the plans performed quite badly with the percentages less than 0.5 for all the parameters. There are the parameters that depict the breakdown of the plan monitoring and evaluation process, and a low score value for these parameters clearly portrays the inefficiencies of the plan from the standpoint of robust plan monitoring and evaluation process.

The reports analyze and portray the outcomes of the actions that are conducted as a consequence of the policies within the plans. The quality of the plans in terms of monitoring and evaluating greatly influence the quality of the report in terms of monitoring and evaluation. Given the unavailability of all the reports corresponding to the plans, a direct correlation was not generated between the results of the plans and reports. However, the results derived in case of the reports from the content analysis clearly portrays lack of importance, awareness and right attitude towards plan monitoring and evaluation. As less than one third of the reports have provided the direction/details on the way monitoring and evaluation was conducted, the question about other parameters could be redundant.

5.4.3 Lack of Importance towards Plan Monitoring and Evaluation

The analysis of the plans and reports found the tendency of the plan-makers to create open-ended and vague policies that are not clarified with time horizons and targets, nor are they measurable. Either because of the lack of awareness and importance or to avoid the consequences of not achieving the targets, the policies are drafted in this manner. Thus, there is an immediate need to bring awareness amongst the plan makers that not achieving the targets should not be a leeway from the creation of precise policies. It should be made clear that not achieving the targets within the determined timeline is not a failure. Rather, it should be looked at as an opportunity to learn and improve.

Furthermore, it was observed that the policy drafters tend to use “might” instead of “will.” “Might” sometimes gives the room to not prepare the plan monitoring and evaluation framework

by diluting the strength of the policies. Reviewing the reports, it was observed that for two municipalities, irrespective of the directions provided to conduct monitoring and evaluation in the plans, the reports were missing details on monitoring and evaluation because of the use of “might.”

As mentioned before, to have challenges while monitoring and evaluating is one aspect, but not drafting precise policies is an aspect that needs immediate attention. It should clearly be noted that without a sound monitoring and evaluation process established at the time of the plan-making process, no planner will be able to certainly answer that why the policies were unable to generate the desired outcomes.

Further, as Seasons (2021) mentioned in his book, the planners are most vulnerable to blame for not achieving the results. This can also be one reason to draft open-ended policies not to enter such awkward situations. However, the clear solution is to consistently track, monitor, evaluate, and communicate the results achieved out of the implementation of the policies. This way, there will be no place for blame. Rather, the focus will be shifted to the actual cause and problem that keeps the actions away from achieving the results. As an added benefit, such an approach will eventually help win the trust of all the stakeholders in the plan monitoring and evaluation framework.

Another argument is that all the municipalities are doing plan monitoring and evaluation to the best of their capabilities within the available resources. However, the lack of awareness and importance towards plan monitoring and evaluation has resulted in some random and abstract forms of monitoring and evaluation. As a result, the policies cannot be implemented as efficiently as in the case of a robust plan monitoring and evaluation mechanism that constantly checks the alignment of implementation actions with the desired outcomes. This is the prime reason because of which the planner cannot take a firm stance when questioned about the outcomes of the policies.

Further, it was observed that a handful of municipalities had drafted measurable policies with targets assigned, especially in the areas other than the areas mandated by the Province to set up

targets on. And based on qualitative observation, there is no single municipality that has identified all the policies as measurable policies with the targets assigned. One reason for this is the lack of awareness and importance towards plan monitoring and evaluation. However, another issue can be the fear of not achieving the targets set and the fear of being laid responsible for not achieving the outcomes, as Seasons (2021) identified. Here, the attitude of the municipalities and the importance of periodic communication of outcomes from monitoring and evaluation comes into play.

Firstly, if the municipalities and the planners are not able to achieve the targets, this should not be considered a failure. As Seasons (2021) says, a learning organization with positive culture to learn and grow will look at failure as an opportunity to learn and fix things so that the same mistakes will not happen repeatedly. And given the uncertainty that planning and the planners face, the actions are prone not to achieve the targets most of the time. However, this should not be an excuse from the responsibility to monitor and evaluate.

Secondly, suppose the outcomes obtained from the plan monitoring and evaluation process are communicated regularly to all the stakeholders, then irrespective of the nature of the outcomes. In that case, all the stakeholders will be aware of the consequences that emerged from the implementation of the policies. This will shift the focus of the stakeholders from blaming each other and towards the actual ground challenges that are holding the smooth implementation of the planning policies back. Thus, to generalize, there is nothing like a failure or blame anywhere. Instead, there is an opportunity to learn, improve and achieve what is desired from the planning policies.

Another important aspect observed is the delegation of the task to monitor and evaluate to other plans and reports. Several plans were observed wherein the task to monitor and evaluate was delegated to other plans and reports. Upon the review of these plans and reports, the delegated task to monitor and evaluate was missing. In some cases, the monitoring and evaluation content that was found was preliminary at best. At times, the reports would just update upon the actions that the municipalities conducted, without any details on the aspects of plan monitoring and evaluation. The argument made here is that the plans can delegate the task to monitor and

evaluate, but at the same time there should be a mechanism established that makes sure that the delegated task to monitor and evaluate is executed, but that is hardly the case with any municipality. Thus, this is a loophole that must be addressed at the time of the plan-making process, as it distorts the entire hierarchy of plan monitoring and evaluation framework, if any.

Quantitatively, it was observed that the plans performed poor in the parameters that are detail oriented and are at the core of the plan monitoring and evaluation process. Another pattern observed is the reduction in results from the objectives of monitoring/evaluation to research questions, research design with research methods, qualitative approach /methods and communication strategy, as compared to other parameters. The primary reason for this reduction in the score is the absence of a robust plan monitoring and evaluation process that was created simultaneously with the plan-making process in almost all of the municipalities.

An important observation here is that only 9 percent of the 45 plans reviewed in this research have given some directions on the research design with research methods, again with not all the detail as per the ideal case scenario. This result clearly portrays that the quality of the plans reviewed is quite far from the ideal process as identified in the literature review. Research design and research methods form the basis of any monitoring and evaluation exercise. In the absence of the most vital parameter of the monitoring and evaluation, it can be inferred that the monitoring and evaluation happening currently is not up to the mark and needs revolutionary change.

The same holds true for the lack of importance given to the qualitative aspect of the plan monitoring and evaluation. Most of the plans analyzed have only the quantitative aspect in the form of a percentage of work done, updates on actions and accomplishments, and quantitative comparison of work done with the previous years' performances. A handful of plans have mentioned utilizing the qualitative aspect to understand the on-ground implications of the planning interventions. Thus, another important aspect of plan monitoring and evaluation is undervalued under the current regime of plan monitoring and evaluation.

Without integrating the qualitative aspect of plan monitoring and evaluation, the actual outcomes that the policies desired will be difficult to achieve. As planning is the field of great uncertainty and change, it is highly recommended to integrate the qualitative aspects of plan monitoring and evaluation so that the underlying implications of the implementation actions can be realized and mitigated if required to achieve the desired outcomes.

In two of all the municipalities reviewed, the plans are created with comprehensive approach and not with directive approach. In other words, the plans have clearly stated that the policies in are not directive and are just guidelines that can be followed. Further, in one of the plans, it was mentioned that the targets mentioned in the plans should be achieved over the course of twenty years, and not annually. Such policies dilute the efficiency of the implementation actions towards the achievement of desired outcomes. The argument here is not about a comprehensive or directive approach. The argument is about the provision of proper monitoring and evaluation framework that facilitates the actions towards achieving the desired outcomes.

All the municipalities have developed quite robust and detailed indicators to measure the performance financially, in the manner a corporation does. Such reports include headings such as financial planning, fiscal sustainability, property tax, budgets, accounting, and external audits, cash flow analysis, cost-benefit analysis, investment, capital management, inventory management, etc. All these parameters measure the performance of the municipality, primary in terms of financial aspects.

However, as argued by several researchers such as Seasons, Guyadeen, Alexander and others, the municipalities are not paying equal attention to the policies mentioned in the Official Plan. Some municipalities do not even prepare measurable goals and policies with targets, so there will be no possibility of preparing a robust monitoring and evaluation framework. Such municipalities end up doing some random and abstract form of monitoring and evaluation.

It's quite ironic that the Official Plan, which makes the foundations of the municipalities to progress and develop, has no measurement established, not even at the provincial level as well, not even at the regional level. Measuring the financial implications with no measurement on the

actions happening in congruence with the Official Plan will end up municipalities in a situation where they cannot be sure whether they are heading in the direction as planned and are the policies within their Official Plans competent enough.

To conclude, until and unless equal importance is not given to the plan monitoring and evaluation process as it is to other aspects of planning like implementation, preparation of annual updates and financial statements, reviewing the land development proposals, plan-making process, to name some, the integration of plan monitoring and evaluation with the planning framework will not be possible.

5.4.4 Consequences of Lack of Standard Plan Monitoring and Evaluation

The previous section covered all the parts and segments of the plan monitoring and evaluation framework in the forms of the parameters. However, the argument here is to eventually bring the focus on the need of a ubiquitous and robust plan monitoring and evaluation as the root of the tree of plan monitoring and evaluation by scrutinizing on these parameters as the branches.

It is of utmost necessity to integrate the plan-making process and monitoring and evaluation process. Currently, what is observed in most municipalities is that the plans are prepared first, and then because there needs to be some form of monitoring and evaluation present different municipalities are developing different forms of monitoring and evaluation to the best of their capabilities. However, that is not the point; if the monitoring and evaluation process is not created along with the plan-making process, then the extent to which the implementation of the policies and their monitoring and evaluation should integrate to function side by side will not happen. Creating a whole new framework on monitoring and evaluation will consume more resources compared to creating the framework and the plan-making process simultaneously.

In the absence of a detailed and well-versed plan monitoring and evaluation that runs in parallel with plan-making and implementation, the consequences can be a lack of motivation, subjective interpretation for individual interests, improper use of public resources, lack of effectiveness of the plan, and finally, uncontrollable development with improper distribution of the implementation outcomes.

In some cases, because of the absence of pre-defined plan monitoring and evaluation framework, the work has to be delegated to be dealt with in future. And since things get too complicated later on that a robust monitoring and evaluation framework is not at all developed. Finally, some sort of partial monitoring and evaluation is carried out at the best of the capability to find out the trends, patterns and, in some cases, the reasons for successes and failures.

When the desired results are not achieved, the planners will try to make another plan with almost all the resources involved in the plan-making process (Seasons, 2021; Stevens 2013). Again, another plan will be developed by neglecting the plan monitoring and evaluation. So, with this plan again, when it will be difficult to achieve the desired outcomes, some other form of plans/policies will be created. This vicious circle will keep on going until the attention goes to the importance and significance of plan monitoring and evaluation.

The primary function of the plan monitoring and evaluation framework is to make sure that the actions are happening in alignment with the policies at the right pace. If the monitoring and evaluation process detects some deviation from desired outcomes, then there will be room to rethink and fix the problems so that the actions are again back up and running towards achieving the desired outcomes developed at the time of the plan-making process. Thus, it should be understood that even a very well-crafted plan without an integrated monitoring and evaluation process will eventually not generate the desired outcomes, as compared to a normal-crafted plan with integrated plan monitoring and evaluation process.

5.4.5 Advantages of a Robust Plan Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

The most important conclusion that emerged out of this thesis is the need to integrate plan monitoring and evaluation with the plan-making process by creating awareness and educating both the existing and future planners about the importance of plan monitoring and evaluation in terms of achieving the desired outcomes. If a monitoring and evaluation framework is established with the plan-making process, then at the very moment a policy is drafted, the connection can be made with the monitoring and evaluation framework. And then, the monitoring and

evaluation process identified for those policies can easily be connected with the section on monitoring and evaluation policies.

This approach will create solid linkages and help establish a robust monitoring and evaluation framework, as the connections are made at the same time when the policies are drafted. Unlike the situation wherein all the policies are drafted, and then some random form of monitoring and evaluation is established.

Further, planning is a field that deals with several aspects like development and growth management, agriculture, environment, transportation, infrastructure delivery, public health, community well-being and poverty, to name some. Given such a wide array of fields planning covers, the pool of stakeholders is equally diverse, with each set of stakeholders having a different set of interests and priorities. To add to this dynamic context, planning is prone to frequent change in the political ruling party, each party with their individual growth and planning perspective. In the realm of such a high level of change and turbulence, it is of utmost necessity to have robust plan monitoring and evaluation framework that operates amidst these ever-changing dynamics.

Integrating plan monitoring and evaluation with the plan-making process should be the steppingstone to create a robust plan monitoring and evaluation that stands strong in the winds of these ever-changing dynamics. This approach would develop a network of interconnected policies clubbed with the monitoring and evaluation framework that, with consistent application, will derive necessary results/outcomes that will not only help the municipalities in general but will help all the stakeholders directly or indirectly. The process will enhance the clarity by throwing light on the implications of planning interventions in all the dimensions of the planning canon.

The added benefits of this approach are: significant improvements in plan efficiency and effectiveness; an ability to see the progress of the entire municipality simultaneously in all aspects; enhancement in the cohesion amongst the different plans and policies via constant monitoring and evaluation, as well, it will provide insights on discrepancies amongst different

plans and policies, if any; enhance the legitimacy and credibility of the planning interventions, increase the accountability of the plan executers, which again will help to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the planning interventions.

5.4.6 Need for Provincial Intervene for Plan Monitoring and Evaluation

Two major observations were made as an outcome of this research to confirm that there is definitely some impact of provincial mandate on the way plan monitoring and evaluation is practiced amongst the municipalities.

The first major observation is that of all the measurable policies with targets majority of them have targets assigned for intensification, employment and jobs, affordable housing, transit-oriented development, growth and development targets in different land use designations, source water protection targets, forest cover targets, open space, and parklands, and finally cycling and parking infrastructure in few cases. Beyond these aspects, there are hardly any policies that are measurable with targets. Even amongst these Provincially mandated aspects, some of the plans have failed to identify the targets, but most of them have identified measurable policies with targets. Since the Province mandated these aspects to have targets by identifying the mechanism to measure and track the progress, most municipalities have tried to abide by these provincial directions. This clearly helps to infer that there is an influence of the provincial intervention on plan monitoring and evaluation.

The second major observation is that, as mentioned above, the housing plans on average performed better or equally well as the Official Plan (in four parameters) quality-wise. As mentioned, the primary intent of selecting the housing plan was to check the impact of the provincial intervention on the plan's quality from plan monitoring and evaluation. Since Housing Services Act (2011) has made it mandatory for all the municipalities to prepare action items with targets, methods to measure the progress and description of the strategies to achieve these targets, most municipalities have tried to abide by these mandatory directions given by the Province. As a result, a clear surge in the result of housing plans is evidence that the provincial mandate impacts the quality of the plans from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation.

Thus, it is clear that there is some level of influence of provincial government intervention on how plan monitoring and evaluation are practiced within the municipalities. Thus, further research is required on the topic to determine the extent to which the Province can interfere so as not to curb the creativity and flexibility of the municipality as Guyadeen (2017) mentions in this article.

5.4.7 Final Recommendations

Firstly, further research should be done to determine how the Province can intervene to efficiently guide and direct the municipality to establish a robust monitoring and evaluation framework. Secondly, there is an immediate need to create awareness by spreading education about the importance of plan monitoring and evaluation. The efforts should be made to integrate the plan monitoring and evaluation with the plan-making process so that a robust and impeccable planning framework with monitoring and evaluation can be established to achieve the desired outcomes by the planning interventions efficiently. The idea here is to understand that the monitoring and evaluation framework should not be considered an individual section that needs to be present in the plans. Instead, it should be considered a part of the plan-making process with its presence in all the segments of the plans.

Further, it should be made clear that it is not important to come up with a full-proof framework of plan monitoring and evaluation. Rather, what is important is to just start with all the available resources. The process of plan monitoring and evaluation is continuous. There will be learning lessons at every corner and intersection, so just starting with the right attitude will sever the purpose. With the progress of time, gradually, with consistent and persistent efforts, a robust monitoring and evaluation framework will develop itself as the outcome.

Finally, it was observed that the lack of plan monitoring and evaluation has a subtler intangible aspect as well, such as the organizational attitudes, the political realities, the level of awareness and education amongst the existing and future planners. Thus, it is crucial to define the role of professional institutions like CPI and OPPI, the role of educational institutes like universities, and the role of ministry and provincial planners in spreading awareness, education and in building

the capacity to proficiently deal with plan monitoring and evaluation. Finally, an immediate need for educating the planners and capacity building is required to improve from the current state of plan monitoring and evaluation.

5.4.8 Some Best Practices Observed

In case of the Region of Peel Official Plan, it was observed that the tone of the policies drafted was more directive and the policies drafted were precise and clear as compared to other plans. The plan has clearly bifurcated the segments of objectives and policies, and wherever necessary, the plan has provided directive, precise, clear and to-the-point policies. Although this is a hypothesis to test further, having direct, clear and precise policies help facilitate implementation at least to some aspect.

In the Region of York, the municipality has created a sustainability policy as the center of all the other policies. The municipality has integrated sustainability strategy with their vision statement, which directs all the other plans, including the Official Plans, housing plans and the strategic plans to keep sustainability at the center of the plan and policies within.

The Region of Peel and City of Hamilton have prepared web-based dashboards to keep track of the progress. The Region of Peel's strategic plan has identified priorities for the upcoming twenty years. Under these priorities, the Region has prepared measurable and trackable indicators to track the progress. Also, the Region has directed the Council strategic plans to be prepared under this framework so that the Council strategic priorities and the priorities identified in the 20-year strategic plan remain in alignment. In contrast, in the case of the City of Hamilton, the web-based dashboard has more to do with the performance of the service delivery by the city to the citizens. Irrespective of the content, the idea here is to understand that this is a good way to communicate and portray the results instantly and should be considered by other municipalities as a part of their communication strategy. An added benefit is that such approach drastically increases the transparency and accessibility of outcomes derived from the planning interventions.

The City of Hamilton has done a phenomenal job in the case of public consultation and has prepared a plan on the outcomes and expectations derived as a part of the rigorous public

consultation approach adopted by the city. The only argument from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation lens is that the public should be consulted similarly when monitoring and evaluation are integrated with plan-making to reap the maximum benefit. This will help to locate the public's expectations and help identify the strategies to keep implementation on track by getting their insights on monitoring and evaluation.

In case of Region of Waterloo, an interesting aspect observed is that the official the plan has directed the municipality to prepare a database in partnership with the Province, relevant stakeholders, area municipalities and Grand River Conservation Authority to monitor the progress and alignment of implementation with that of the policies within this plan. Also, the plan states that not all but the relevant information from the database will be presented to the public whenever required. Finally, the municipality plans to use the database to make informed decisions during the comprehensive review of the Official Plan and other major plans. This is a unique approach observed just in the Region of Waterloo. Developing such a database and collecting and analyzing relevant data in a consistent fashion is a part of a robust monitoring and evaluation system.

In the case of the County of Norfolk Official Plan, the plan in its monitoring section had re-identified all the aspects of planning to be monitored annually in the form of a checklist. This approach is again beneficial as it helps facilitate monitoring and evaluation by preparing the checking list of the actions that should happen under monitoring and evaluation.

It was found that there is a third-party organization or consultancy by the name of MBNCanada that compares the performance of 16 of the major municipalities across Canada. However, the viewpoint of the comparison is more towards financial and performance context. The idea here is to understand that such third-party organization can be established in Ontario or across Canada to help all the municipalities standardize their plan monitoring and evaluation process, and such organizations can create a community wherein the municipalities can learn from each other and strive to get maximum out of the plan monitoring and evaluation process. Further, just to connect the dots, the provincial government could set up an organization that ensures plan monitoring and evaluation takes place in a consistent manner across all municipalities.

5.5 Ideas and Directions for Further Research

There is considerable potential to conduct further research in the field of plan monitoring and evaluation and below mentioned are some of the suggestions that can help the research community carry forward the research on plan monitoring and evaluation, so that it becomes an integrated part of planning framework to get the optimal benefits from the planning interventions:

- A study should be performed at the provincial level to understand how the relevant Acts and the supporting provincial plans could mandate plan monitoring and evaluation.
- Further research can be done to determine how the Province can intervene to facilitate plan monitoring and evaluation at the municipality level.
- A study should be conducted to understand the gaps in the planning framework from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation all the way from Province to the region to local municipalities. In this case, all the plans can be analyzed from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation to locate the gaps and then to come up with suggestions to overcome these gaps.
- Finally, this research has identified high plan quality parameters from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation. A study should be conducted to analyse these parameters and understand the correlation amongst them. As in the current thesis, all the parameters identified have been given equal weight.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Sample Plans and Reports Under Study

Sr No	Municipality	Tier of Municipality	2016 Population	Plan	Classification	Year
1.1	City of Toronto	Single	2,731,571	City of Toronto Official Plan	Official Plan	2015
1.2				Corporate Strategic Plan	Strategic Plan	2020
1.3				HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan	Housing Plan	2020
1.4				City of Toronto Official Plan Indicators 2017	Official Plan Report	2017
1.5				City of Toronto Official Plan Indicators 2018	Official Plan Report	2018
1.6				City Planning Annual Report	Generic Report	2018
1.7				City Planning Strategic Plan 2013 to 2018	Only for Qualitative Review	2013
2.1	Regional Municipality of Peel	Upper	1,381,739	Region of Peel Official Plan	Official Plan	2014
2.2				Region of Peel: Term of Council Priorities 2018-2022	Strategic Plan	2018
2.3				The Region Of Peel's Housing And Homelessness Plan Home For All 2018–2028	Housing Plan	2018
2.4				Measuring and Monitoring Report	Official Plan Report	2017
2.5				Regional Official Plan Monitoring Program: A Look at Our Progress	Official Plan Report	2006
2.6				2020 Annual Progress Update on the 2018-2022 Term of Council Priorities	Strategic Plan Report	2020
2.7				Peel Housing and Homelessness Plan - 2020 Annual Update	Housing Plan Report	2020
2.8				2015 - 2035 Strategic Plan	Only for Qualitative Review	2015
3.01	Regional Municipality of York	Upper	1,109,909	The Regional Municipality of York Official Plan	Official Plan	2016
3.02				2019 to 2023 Strategic Plan	Strategic Plan	2019

Sr No	Municipality	Tier of Municipality	2016 Population	Plan	Classification	Year
3.03				Housing Solutions: A Place for Everyone Phase 2 Plan 2019 to 2023	Housing Plan	2019
3.04				York Region Official Plan Monitoring Report	Official Plan Report	2018
3.05				2017 Growth and Development Review	Generic Report	2017
3.06				2019 to 2023 Strategic Plan Year 1 (2019) Progress Report	Strategic Plan Report	2019
3.07				Housing Solutions: A place for everyone Progress Report 2017	Housing Plan Report	2017
3.08				Vision 2051	Only for Qualitative Review	-
3.09				York Region Sustainability Strategy	Only for Qualitative Review	2007
3.1				Vision 2026: Sustainability Progress Report	Only for Qualitative Review	2011
3.11				Housing Solutions: A place for everyone York Region 10-year Housing plan	Only for Qualitative Review	2014
4.1				City of Ottawa Official Plan	Official Plan	2017
4.2				City of Ottawa Strategic Plan 2019-2022	Strategic Plan	2019
4.3				City of Ottawa: 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Plan	Housing Plan	2020
4.4				Annual Development Report	Generic Report	2019
4.5				Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Highlights	Generic Report	2019
4.6				10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan Progress Report 2014-2017	Housing Plan Report	2017
4.7				2020 Highlights - Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development	Generic Report	2020
4.8				City of Ottawa Ten Year Plan a Home for Everyone: 2014 – 2024	Only for Qualitative Review	2014
	City of Ottawa	Single	934,243			

Sr No	Municipality	Tier of Municipality	2016 Population	Plan	Classification	Year
5.1	Regional Municipality of Durham	Upper	645,862	Durham Regional Official Plan	Official Plan	2015
5.2				Durham Region Strategic Plan 2020-2024	Strategic Plan	2020
5.3				At Home in Durham: Five Year Review 2019	Housing Plan	2019
5.4				At Home in Durham, the Durham Housing Plan 2014-2024 Annual Report	Housing Plan Report	2020
5.5				A New Strategic Plan for Durham Region: 2015-2019	Only for Qualitative Review	2015
5.6				Region of Durham Master Housing Strategy	Only for Qualitative Review	2020
6.1	Regional Municipality of Halton	Upper	548,435	Halton Region Official Plan	Official Plan	2015
6.2				Halton Region Strategic Business Plan	Strategic Plan	2019
6.3				Comprehensive Housing Strategy 2014-2024 Five-year Review	Housing Plan	2019
6.4				The Regional Municipality of Halton - Regional Official Plan Review Phase 1	Only for Qualitative Review	2016
6.5				Housing Services Program Update	Housing Plan Report	2017
6.6				Integrated Growth Management Strategy (Halton Region to 2041)	Only for Qualitative Review	2019
6.7				Comprehensive Housing Strategy 2014-2024	Only for Qualitative Review	2014
7.1	City of Hamilton	Single	536,917	Urban Hamilton Official Plan	Official Plan	2013
7.2				Web-based Trust and Confidence Report (Inclusive of City's Strategic Priorities and Council's Strategic Priorities)	Strategic Plan	2019
7.3				City of Hamilton Housing and Homelessness Action Plan	Housing Plan	2020
7.4				Growth Related Integrated Development Strategy - Final Report	Only for Qualitative Review	2006

Sr No	Municipality	Tier of Municipality	2016 Population	Plan	Classification	Year
7.5				GRIDS2 Growth Summary: 2006-2016	Generic Report	2016
7.6				Housing and Homelessness Action Plan Update	Housing Plan Report	2018
8.1	Regional Municipality of Waterloo	Upper	535,154	Regional Official Plan - Region of Waterloo	Official Plan	2015
8.2				Region of Waterloo Strategic Focus 2015-2018	Strategic Plan	2015
8.3				10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan	Housing Plan	2019
8.4				Region of Waterloo Strategic Focus 2015-2018 Status Update	Strategic Plan Report	2018
8.5				Regional Growth Management Strategy	Only for Qualitative Review	2003
8.6				Waterloo Region's Housing Action Plan for Households with Low to Moderate Incomes	Only for Qualitative Review	2014
9.1	Regional Municipality of Niagara	Upper	447,888	Niagara Region Official Plan	Official Plan	2015
9.2				Strategic Plan and Implementation Plan 2019-2022	Strategic Plan	2019
9.3				Five-year Review of Niagara's 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Action Plan	Housing Plan	2019
9.4				Niagara Official Plan Growing Region: Summer 2019 Status Report	Official Plan Report	2019
9.5				Housing and Homelessness Action Plan Update 2018	Housing Plan Report	2018
9.6				Niagara 2041: Fostering an Environment for Economic Prosperity	Only for Qualitative Review	2015
9.7				A Home for All: Niagara's 10-year community action plan to help people find and keep housing	Only for Qualitative Review	2013
10.1	City of London	Single	383,822	The London Plan	Official Plan	2016
10.2				2019-2023 Strategic Plan for the City of London	Strategic Plan	2019

Sr No	Municipality	Tier of Municipality	2016 Population	Plan	Classification	Year
10.3				Housing Stability for All: The Housing Stability Action Plan for the City of London 2019-2024	Housing Plan	2019
10.4				November 2020 Semi-Annual Progress Report	Generic Report	2020
10.5				2016 and 2017 Performance Report and 2015-2017 Impact Assessment	Strategic Plan Report	2018
10.6				Homeless Prevention and Housing Plan	Only for Qualitative Review	2013
11.1	City of Greater Sudbury	Single	161,647	City of Greater Sudbury Official Plan	Official Plan	2020
11.2				City of Greater Sudbury Strategic Plan 2019-2027	Strategic Plan	2016
11.3				Housing and Homelessness Plan Update (2019-2023)	Housing Plan	2019
11.4				2016 Annual Report - Planning Services Division	Official Plan Report	2017
11.5				City of Greater Sudbury Housing and Homelessness Plan Annual Update	Housing Plan Report	2018
11.6				Planning Services Division Strategic Business Plan 2017-2022	Only for Qualitative Review	2016
11.7				The City of Greater Sudbury - Housing and Homelessness Plan	Only for Qualitative Review	2013
12.1	County of Oxford	Upper	110,862	County of Oxford Official Plan	Official Plan	2020
12.2				Strategic Plan 2015-2018	Strategic Plan	2015
12.3				Five Year Review of 10 Year Shelter Plan 2014-2024	Housing Plan	2019
12.4				Strategic Plan Progress Report	Strategic Plan Report	2018
12.5				2020 Annual Progress Report - 10 Year Shelter Plan	Housing Plan Report	2020
12.6				Oxford County 10 Year Shelter Plan 2014-2024	Only for Qualitative Review	2014
13.1		Single		Norfolk County Official Plan	Official Plan	2020

Sr No	Municipality	Tier of Municipality	2016 Population	Plan	Classification	Year
13.2	County of Norfolk		64,044	Norfolk County Council Strategic Priorities 2019-2022	Strategic Plan	2019
13.3				Haldimand and Norfolk Housing and Homelessness Plan 2020-2030	Housing Plan	2019
13.4				Haldimand and Norfolk 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan Progress Report	Housing Plan Report	2019
13.5				Haldimand and Norfolk 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan	Only for Qualitative Review	2013
14.1				District Municipality of Muskoka	Upper	60,599
14.2	The District Municipality of Muskoka Strategic Priorities 2016	Strategic Plan	2014			
14.3	Housing for Everyone the District Municipality of Muskoka 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Plan 2020-2030	Housing Plan	2020			
14.4	Housing for Everyone the District Municipality of Muskoka 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Plan: Annual Update 2020	Housing Plan Report	2020			
14.5	The District Municipality of Muskoka - Growth Strategy Phase 1 and 2 Report	Only for Qualitative Review	2008			
14.6	The District Municipality of Muskoka 2019 Growth Strategy - Forecast and Growth Allocation Report	Only for Qualitative Review	2019			
15.1	County of Huron	Upper	59,297			
15.2				County of Huron Homes: Huronview and Huron Strategic Plan 2016	Strategic Plan	2016
15.3				A Long-Term Affordable Housing and Homelessness Plan for the County of Huron 5 Year Review	Housing Plan	2019

Sr No	Municipality	Tier of Municipality	2016 Population	Plan	Classification	Year
15.4				2019 Annual Housing and Homelessness Report	Housing Plan Report	2019
15.5				A Long-Term Affordable Housing and Homelessness Plan for the County of Huron	Only for Qualitative Review	2014

Appendix 2 Content Analysis Matrix

Below mentioned is the transposed segment of the content analysis matrix for the plans for City of Toronto. Since the entire table is quite huge only the transposed segment for City of Toronto has been showcased in this appendix.

Sr No		1.1	1.2	1.3	City of Toronto Mean
Municipality		City of Toronto			
Tier of Municipality		Single			
Population		2,731,571			
Plan		City of Toronto Official Plan	Corporate Strategic Plan	HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan	
Level/Type of Plan		Primary	Secondary	Secondary	
Year of Plan Latest Consolidation		2002	2020	2020	
Overall Plan in correspondence with Plan Monitoring and Evaluation	Prioritized Goals/Policies	1	1	1	1.00
	Measurable Goals/Policies	1	0	1	0.67
	Targets/milestones	1	0	1	0.67
	Linking goals/policies with monitoring/evaluation	1	0	1	0.67
	Directions to monitor/evaluate	1	0	1	0.67
	Referring other plans	1	1	1	1.00
	Delegation of monitoring/evaluation	1	0	1	0.67
Indicators	Mention of Indicators	1	0	1	0.67
	Directions to prepare Indicators	1	0	0	0.33
Monitoring and Evaluation Process	Section for Implementation	1	1	1	1.00
	Section for Monitoring/Evaluation	1	0	1	0.67
	Objectives of monitoring/evaluation	1	0	1	0.67

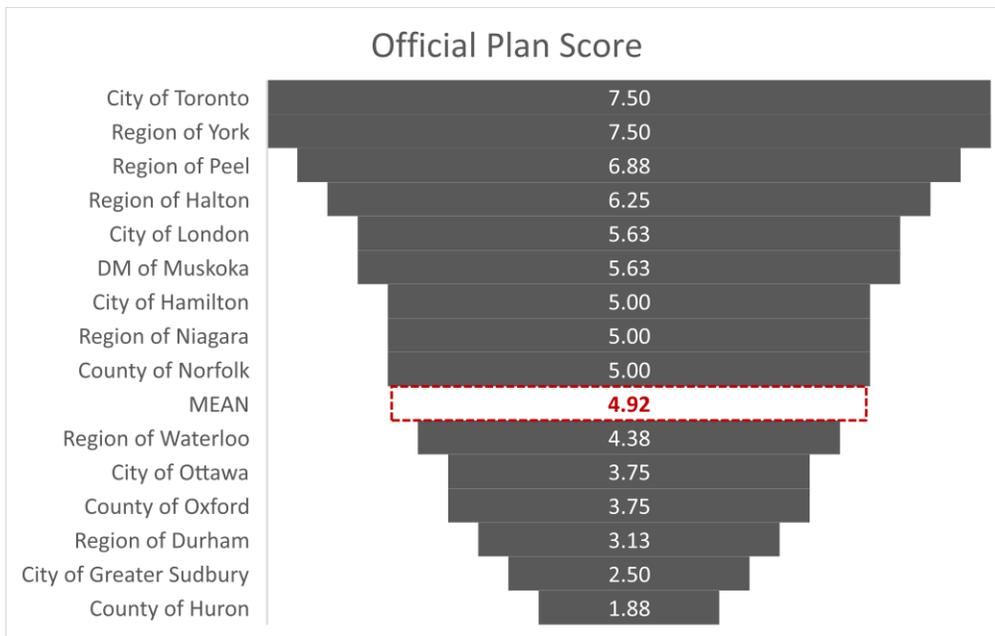
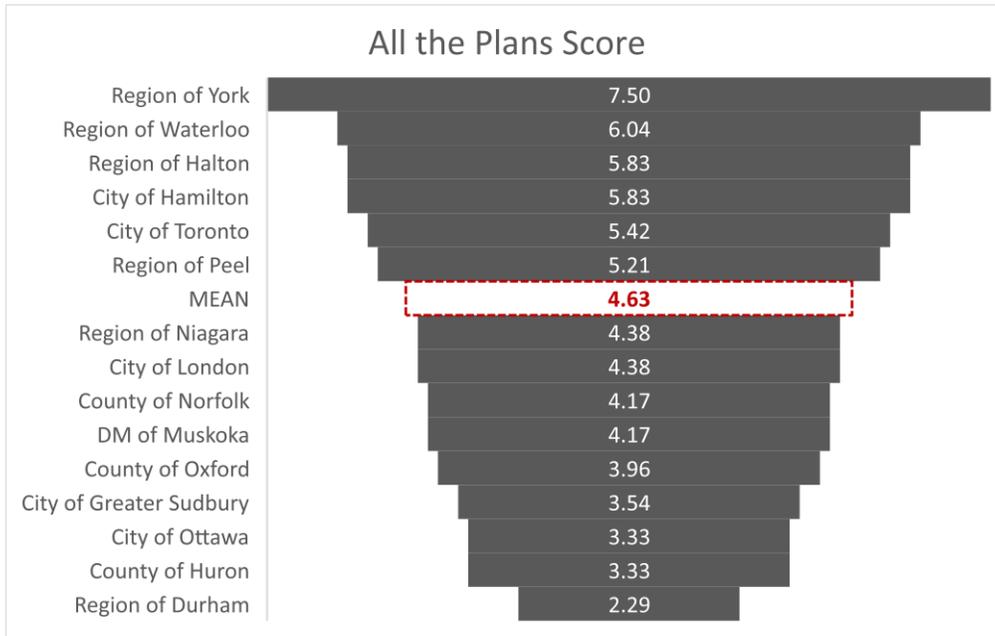
	Research Questions	0	0	0	0.00
	Research Design with Research Methods	0	0	0	0.00
	Inclusion of Qualitative Approach/Methods	1	0	1	0.67
	Frequency of monitoring/evaluation	1	0	1	0.67
	Communication Strategy	0	0	0	0.00
Scoring		7.50	1.88	6.88	5.42

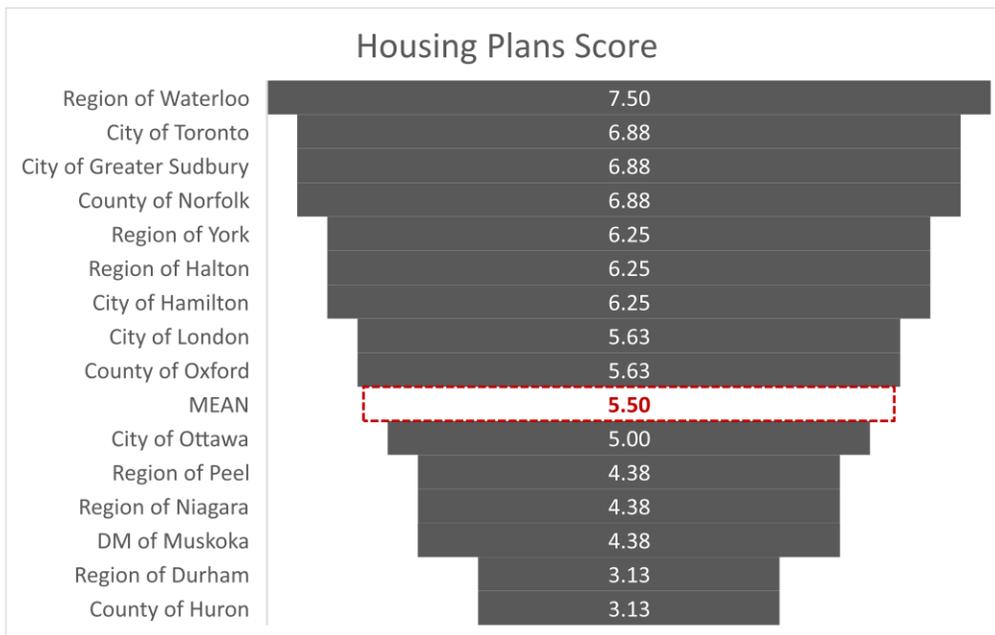
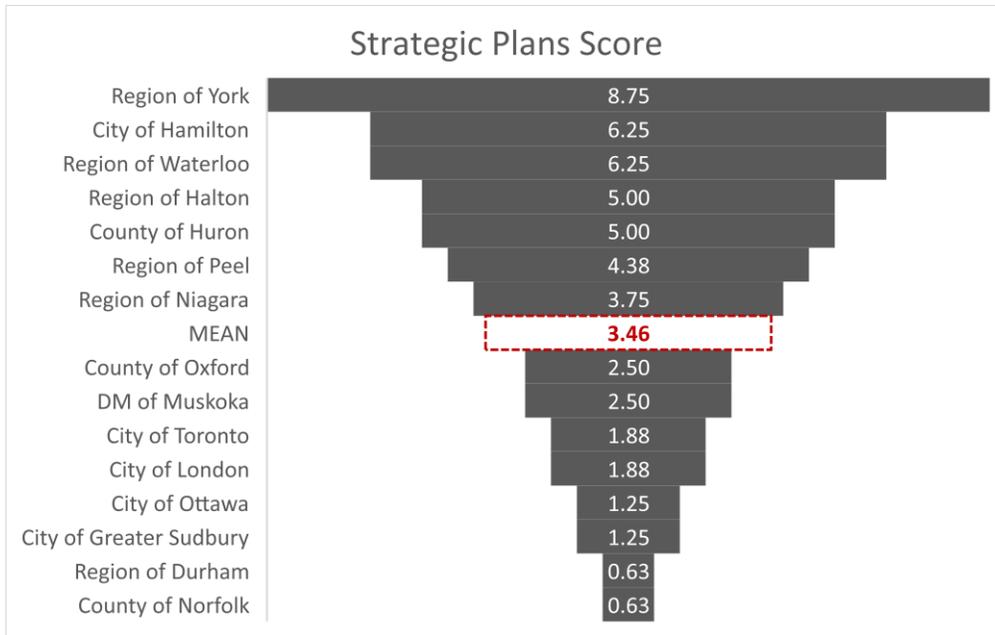
Again, the table mentioned below portrays a segment of the content analysis matrix for reports for City of Toronto.

Sr No	1.1	1.2	1.3	City of Toronto Mean
Municipality	City of Toronto			
Tier of Municipality	Single			
Population	2,731,571			
Plan	City of Toronto Official Plan Indicators 2017	City of Toronto Official Plan Indicators 2018	City Planning Annual Report	
Report Category	Official Plan Report	Official Plan Report	Generic Report	
Year of Plan Adoption/Publication	2017	2018	2018	
Linking with plans	1	1	1	1.00
Directions/Details on Monitoring and Evaluation	1	1	0	0.67
Connects to Research Question / Identify Research Questions	1	1	0	0.67
Research Design with Research Methods	0	0	0	0.00
Inclusion of Qualitative Approach/Methods	0	0	0	0.00
Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations	1	1	0	0.67

Robust Communication Strategy	0	0	0	0.00
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Appendix 3 Municipality-wise Scoring Charts

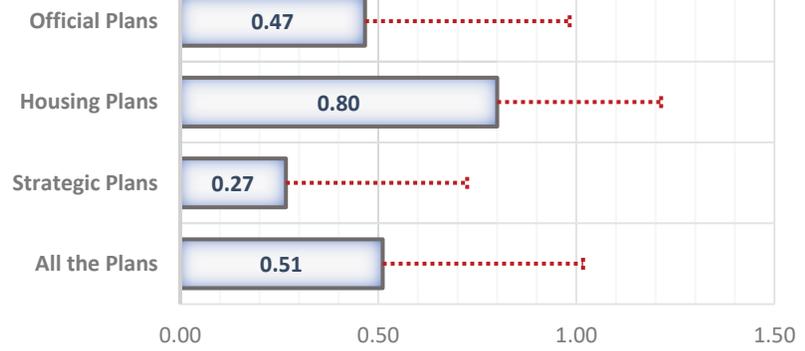




Appendix 4 Individual Parameter-wise Charts



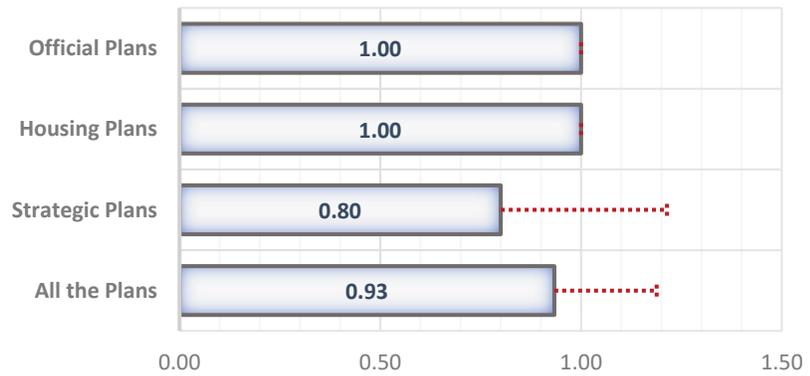
LINKING GOALS/POLICIES WITH MONITORING/EVALUATION



DIRECTIONS TO MONITOR/EVALUATE



REFERRING OTHER PLANS



DELEGATION OF MONITORING/EVALUATION



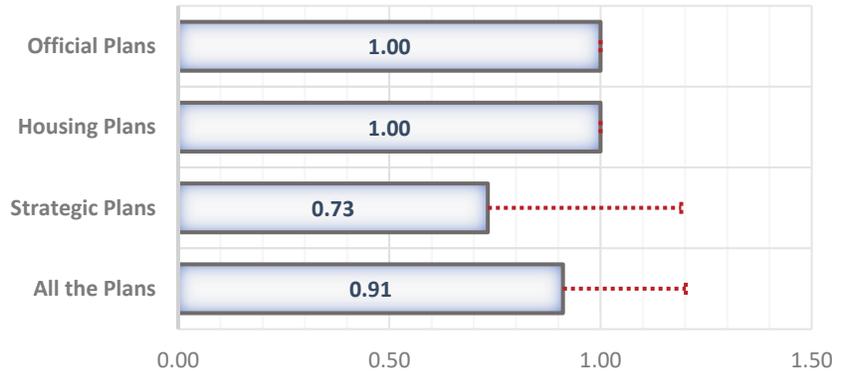
MENTION OF INDICATORS



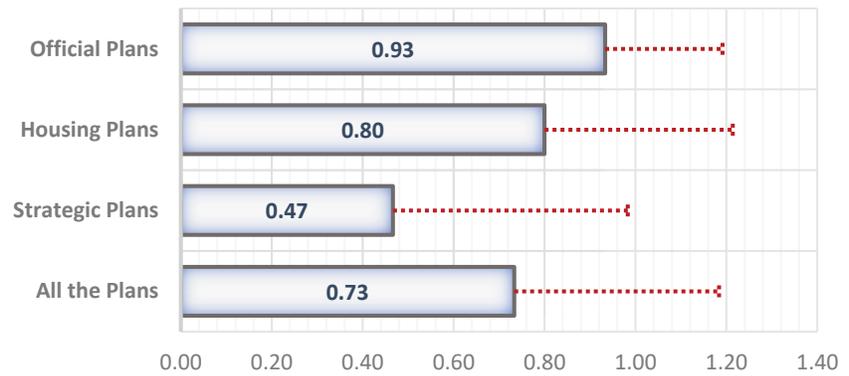
DIRECTIONS TO PREPARE INDICATORS



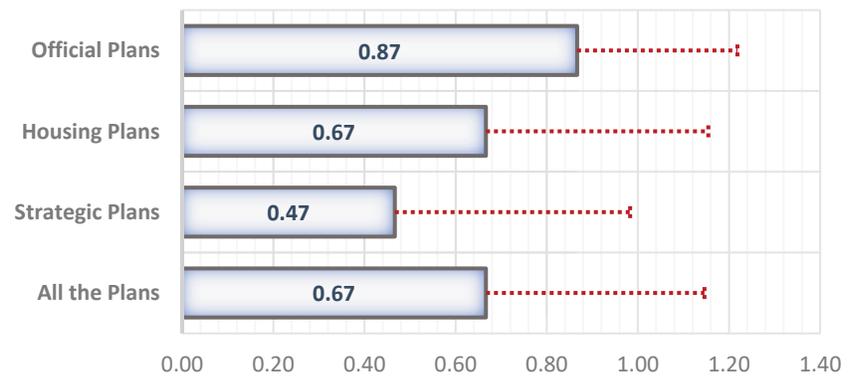
SECTION FOR IMPLEMENTATION



SECTION FOR MONITORING/EVALUATION



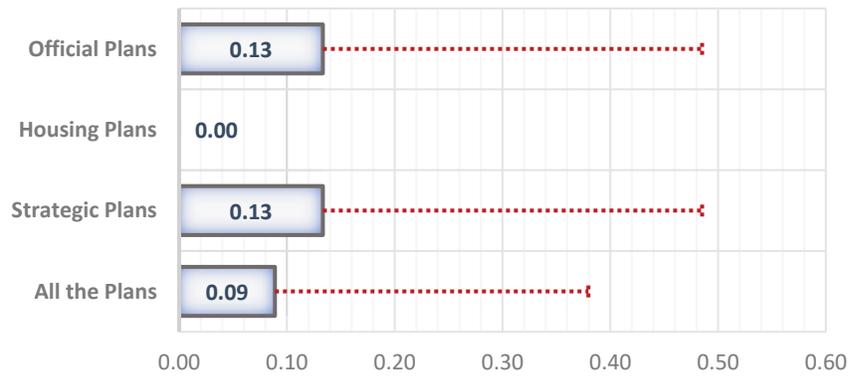
OBJECTIVES OF MONITORING/EVALUATION



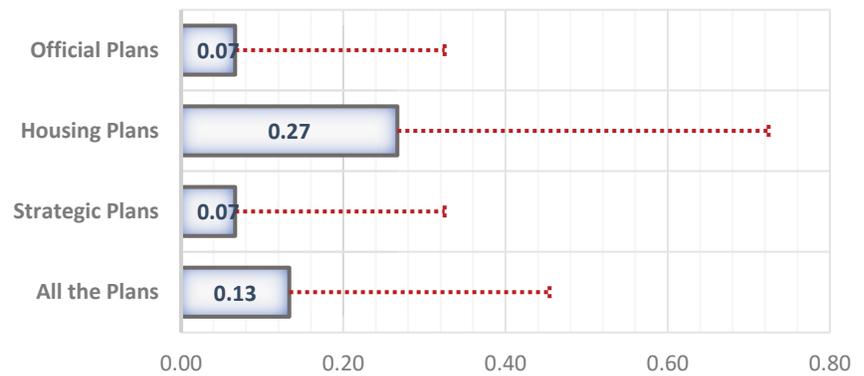
RESEARCH QUESTIONS



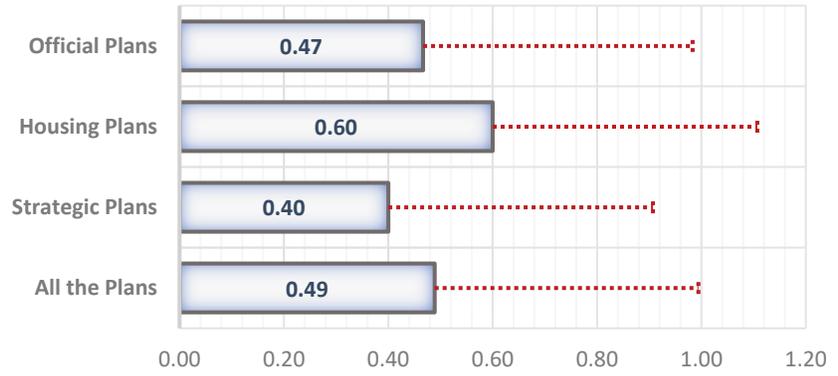
RESEARCH DESIGN WITH RESEARCH METHODS



INCLUSION OF QUALITATIVE APPROACH/METHODS



FREQUENCY OF MONITORING/EVALUATION



COMMUNICATION STRATEGY



Appendix 5 Indicators Flowchart for the City of Toronto, Region of Peel and Region of York

City of Toronto Indicators Flowchart

Official Plan Indicators: City of Toronto		
Directing Growth	Economy and Employment	Housing
Rate of Development	Jobs in Employment Areas	Housing Diversity - Size
- Number of approved residential units - Non-residential Gross Floor Area	- Percentage of full time and part time jobs located in Employment Areas	- Percentage of approved residential units with 2 or more bedrooms
Location of Development	Jobs in Employment Areas	Rental Replacement
- Percentage of approved development both residential units and non-residential GFA in growth areas	- Percentage of full time and part time jobs located in Employment Areas	- Number of rental units demolished and replaced by affordability level
Density of Major Growth Areas	Jobs Diversity in Employment Areas	Quality of the Build Environment
- People and jobs per hectare in the Downtown, the Centres and the city as a whole	- Percentage of employees by employment sector within Employment Areas and the rest of the city	New Park Space
Mix of Jobs and People	Downtown as a Premier Office Location	- New parkland area: acquisition and secured through development
- Jobs to people ratio for the city as a whole, the Downtown and Centres	Total Class A office space in the Downtown	Privately Owned Publicly-Accessible Spaces
Development Close to Transit	Office Development in Centres	- Number of Privately Owned Publicly-Accessible Spaces (POPS) secured through planning approvals process
- % of approved development both residential units and non-residential GFA within 500 metres of planned or existing higher order transit	Square metres of office space approved in the Centres	Public Art
Transportation	Climate Change	- Number of dollars secured for public art through the planning approvals process
Transportation by Mode	Office Development in Centres	Heritage Protection
- Percentage of morning peak trips by mode for city as a whole and planning districts for trips originating from within the city	Greenhouse gas emissions per year	- Number of properties added to the Heritage Register
Cycling Infrastructure		
- Linear kilometres of cycling infrastructure		

City of Toronto – Official Plan Indicators

Region of Peel Indicators Flowchart

Region of Peel Official Plan recommended set of indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - designated green space <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - natural cover - urban tree canopy - indicator species - surface and groundwater quality and quantity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - water use and efficiency - transit modal share - transportation demand management - redevelopment to total development - residential and non-residential densities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - housing production - industrial/commercial ratios - employment to population ratios <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - employment land area - work force - designated greenfield densities - residential development in built-up area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - household waste - energy use - public health - social trends

Official Plan Indicators (2017) – Region of Peel	
Built Environment	Resources
Growth Management	Water
Population in Peel	Water Quality for Aquatic Health
Employment in Peel	Surface Water Quantity
Urban Growth Centre Density	Groundwater Quantity
Designated Greenfield Area Density Residential	Flood Risk
Residential Intensification Rate	Impervious Surfaces Stormwater
Designated Greenfield Area Land Supply	Stormwater Management
New Housing Supply by Type	Agriculture
Complete and Healthy Community	Agriculture Production and Number of Farms
Balance of Jobs and People	Conversion of Prime Agricultural Area
Modal Split	On-Farm Diversification
Vehicle Kilometres Travelled	Aggregates
Residing Near Public Transit	Disturbance and Rehabilitation
Housing	Total Annual Aggregate Production
Housing Tenure	Resource Extraction Land Availability
Official Plan New Housing Supply Targets	Natural Environment
Purpose-Built Rental Supply New	Air Quality and Climate
New Social Housing Supply	Community Greenhouse Gas Emissions
Ownership Housing Supply	Corporate Greenhouse Gas Emissions
Affordable Ownership Housing Supply	Air Quality
Affordable Ownership Housing Supply	Greenlands System
Affordability of Ownership Housing	Natural Heritage Protection
	Natural Heritage Restoration
	Urban Tree Canopy Cover

The indicators in Light Orange are Performance Indicators with targets whereas indicators in light green are tracking indicators with no defined targets.

Region of Peel – Official Plan Indicators

Region of Peel Official Plan recommended set of indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - designated green space <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - natural cover - urban tree canopy - indicator species - surface and groundwater quality and quantity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - water use and efficiency - transit modal share - transportation demand management - redevelopment to total development - residential and non-residential densities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - housing production - industrial/commercial ratios - employment to population ratios <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - employment land area - work force - designated greenfield densities - residential development in built-up area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - household waste - energy use - public health - social trends

2015-2035 Strategic Plan (2020) – Region of Peel	
Living	Thriving
Housing Affordability	Sustainable Transportation Modes
Employment and Participation Rates	Crime Rate
Charitable Donors in Peel	Sense of Community Belonging
Diabetes Prevalence	Residential Housing Starts
Early Childhood Development Status	Value of Building Permits Issued
Client Service Outcome Achievement	Non-Residential Tax Assessment
Prevalence of Low Income	Employment Growth
Self-rated General Health	Population Growth
Client Satisfaction with Service Delivery Channel Experience	Rate of Intensification
	Designated Greenfield Area Density
	Domestic Water Consumption
	Waste Diversion Rate
Leading	
Client Satisfaction with Regional Services	Resident Perception of Value for Tax Dollars
Region Is in Touch with the Needs of the Community	Resident Trust and Confidence in the Region of Peel
Managing Peel's Growth Risk	Annual Credit Rating
Status of Regional Infrastructure Assets	Region of Peel Corporate GHG Emissions
	Annual Tax Rate Increase

Region of Peel – 2015-2035 Strategic Plan Indicators

Appendix 6 Municipality-wise Qualitative Observations for all the Plans and Reports under review

City of Toronto

City of Toronto Official Plan is quite comprehensive and covers almost all the diverse planning aspects in sufficient detail. The plan has successfully identified the priorities to direct the growth and provide measurable goals/policies with targets in some instances. However, the targets are limited to the intensification targets, density targets and affordable housing targets. The plan has successfully bifurcated the land use designations and has precisely given directions to direct the growth in conjugation with these land use designations along with the specified density and intensification targets. However, in all aspects other than density and intensification, the plan fails to establish measurable policies and targets.

The Toronto Official Plan has successfully connected all the policies with the plan monitoring and evaluation framework. The plan also provides sufficient direction to prepare indicators and targets to measure the progress continuously. However, the plan itself has not identified indicators or targets and has delegated this task under the section of plan monitoring and evaluation.

Further, the Official Plan contains a specific section on implementation that explains the application of the planning tools granted under the **Planning Act (1990)** to make the planning happen as per the Official Plan. The plan also contains an exclusive section on plan monitoring and evaluation. However, it is just limited to give directions on the preparation of indicators with targets to keep track of the development. In some instances, the plan has indirectly talked about adopting the qualitative aspect to understand the practical implications of the planning interventions.

Further, the City of Toronto prepared two progress reports consecutively in the years 2017 and 2018. The progress reports go by the name of the City of Toronto Official Plan Indicators, and

Appendix 5 Indicators Flowchart for the City of Toronto, Region of Peel and Region of York mentions all the indicators which the city has developed. The city did a phenomenal job by preparing the progress report on Official Plan indicators, and the indicators cover almost all the aspects of the planning cannon. However, the flip side about the Official Plan indicators report is that it hardly talks about the targets and progress towards achieving the targets. The report merely calculates the progress achieved within all the aspects of the planning. This only serves the purpose of plan monitoring and evaluation partially. As under the ideal case scenario identified in the literature review, the plans are supposed to create measurable policies with targets assigned for all the policies. It needs to identify appropriate indicators to track the progress in resemblance with the established targets. The Official Plan indicators report also fails to identify a standard monitoring and evaluation research design based on pre-identified research questions that the city needs to answer. Finally, the progress reports also lack the qualitative aspect of monitoring and evaluation. However, this can be considered as the first step towards the ideal monitoring and evaluation scenario, which the research states.

The strategic plan encapsulates both the corporate priorities and the Toronto Public Service's strategic priorities. However, from the perspective of monitoring and evaluation, the plan stands below average. The plan has identified the priorities and has linked the priorities with the respective plans/policies. Other than that, the plan lacks the identification of measurable policies with targets, directions to monitor and evaluate, and the development of a plan monitoring and evaluation framework with research design and methods identified.

Finally, under the housing plans, the City of Toronto has recently prepared– HousingTO 2020-2030 Action plan and HousingTO 2020-2030 Implementation Plan. The plans run in conjugation with each other. In terms of monitoring and evaluation, the action plan has successfully identified the prioritized actions. However, all the policies are not measurable with targets assigned, and of all the policies with targets, most of them are related to intensification and affordable housing. All the priorities are clustered as short-term, medium-term, and ongoing actions in the implementation plan, but very few policies have identified the targets. The plans also mention indicators but fail to provide direction on preparing them. The plans have exclusive sections both

for implementation and monitoring, with identified frequencies to monitor. Still, the plans have not identified the research question and the research design to answer these questions. The plans have inculcated the qualitative aspect of monitoring and evaluation in some instances by stating to engage the public for focused discussion, learning from the existing dwellers, and conducting surveys.

The study also reviewed City Planning Strategic Plan 2013 to 2018⁸. The city's planning department's strategic plan has successfully identified the measurable policies with targets by linking the policies with the monitoring and evaluation section. The plan also provides precise direction on monitoring and evaluating the progress along with the directions to identify and prepare the indicators. The plan has an exclusive section for implementation and monitoring with objectives defined, and monitoring frequencies are also identified.

This clearly portrays several other plans, strategies, and reports under the Official Plans and the planning framework of the municipalities that guide and direct the monitoring and evaluation happening within the city.

Regional Municipality of Peel

The Region of Peel Official Plan was approved by the Region's Council in 1996, and the study has reviewed the 2014 consolidated version of the Region of Peel Official Plan. Score-wise, the Region of Peel Official Plan has outperformed all the other plans, but the City of Toronto and Region of York. The Peel Official Plan has prioritized the policies and prepared measurable policies with the targets assigned for intensification, housing targets, employment targets and density targets clustered with the land designations. The Region of Peel is silent to prepare measurable policies with targets on other aspects of the plan. However, the plan has provided sufficient direction to fill that gap by linking all the plans' policies with the monitoring and evaluation framework. On

⁸ The City Planning Strategy Plan 2013 to 2018 was only analyzed from understanding point of view, however, the analysis on the content analysis matrix is limited to the Official Plan Official Plans, housing plans and Council strategic plans only.

that note, the Region has established the "Regional Official Plan Performance Measurement Program (ROPPMP)" as the plan monitoring and evaluation framework.

Under this framework, the Region has provided in-depth directions on monitoring the progress and achievement of the Official Plan's goals and policies. The ROPPMP provides precise directions on identifying and preparing the indicators and delegates the task to prepare reports periodically. ROPPMP intends to align the monitoring and evaluation with other plans/policies across the region and intends to connect with the area municipalities. This is a perfect example of a robust monitoring and evaluation approach that connects to all the dimensions of the planning hierarchy with not being limited to just the upper-tier municipality.

The limitations of the Region of Peel's Official Plan are a lack of monitoring and evaluation research design with identified research question and indicators, the qualitative aspect of monitoring and evaluation, and a robust communication strategy to convey outcomes. There were places wherein the Official Plan has delegated implementation and interpretation of the policies to the area municipalities and other lower-tier municipalities. The only argument here is that the delegation of work should be made so that the implementation can be monitored and tracked. In the absence of a mechanism that checks the implementation of delegated tasks, the probability of implementation reduces drastically. Another observation on the Peel Official Plan is that the tone is more direct, and it provides clear policies on what is allowed and what is not. And having a directive and imposing tone facilitates implementation at least to some aspect.

Under the ROPPMP, the Region of Peel has prepared two reports to date. The first report was published in 2006 by the name of Regional Official Plan Monitoring Program: A Look at Our Progress and the second report was published in 2017 by the name of Measuring and Monitoring Report – Region of Peel Official Plan. Both the plans have indicators of progress and provide explanations on the present state of Official Plan implementation.

In the monitoring and evaluation report for Region of Peel (2017), the report bifurcates the indicators in three segments: Natural Environment, Built Environment, and Resources. Under these three categories, the report identified 36 indicators, with some indicators being

performance indicators and the others being tracking indicators, as shown in **Appendix 4**. The primary difference between the performance indicator and the tracking indicator is that the performance indicators have targets established to compare and contrast with. In contrast, the tracking indicators have no targets and uses the data along the timeline to track the changes (to check the conformity with Regional Official Plans).

The report has done quite a phenomenal job by giving an overview of the methodology, the description of every indicator with relevant policies, sources of data collection, method of data analysis, description of the importance of the indicator plus the data collected, and finally, commenting on the conformity of the indicators with that of the Regional Official Plan.

The report scored pretty well under the content analysis. However, the report lacks the identification of stakeholder classified indicators; a well-versed research design and method to glue everything together; allocation of appropriate resources for monitoring and evaluation with a specific timeline for frequencies of monitoring and evaluation; and finally, a well-designed communication strategy that can transfer the results of the monitoring and evaluation to appropriate stakeholders periodically.

Finally, the report states the tracking indicators to be qualitative in nature, but the only reason the indicators have no targets does not mean that they are qualitative. However, there are instances in the report wherein the report has identified some relevant justifications in conjugation with the evaluation outcomes. Thus, there are some glimpses of the qualitative aspect of monitoring and evaluation seen within this report.

In addition to the Official Plan and the Official Plan monitoring report, the Region of Peel has created a 2015-2035 (web-based) Strategic Plan⁹. The region has created this strategic plan under the name of Community for Life. This strategic plan has also connected with the Council's strategic priorities action plan. Further, the web-based report has provided a live 20-year

⁹ The 2015-2035 (web-based) Strategic Plan was reviewed qualitatively for understanding the planning framework. However, the analysis will not include this plan.

outcomes progress dashboard to track the progress on the 2015-2035 Strategic Plan. The dashboard has identified 31 indicators under three streams – Area of Focus: Living; Thriving; Leading, as shown in **Appendix 4**. The dashboard provides the progress on the indicators' status, with a graphical presentation of progress along with explaining the importance and details on measuring the progress for all the 31 indicators.

Thus, the monitoring and evaluation practiced in the Region of Peel is quite close to the ideal monitoring and evaluation framework that research is focusing upon. The primary reason is establishing a robust monitoring and evaluation framework for both the Official Plan and the long-term 20-year strategic plan and establishing the indicators to measure the progress.

The missing blocks that keep Region of Peel's monitoring and evaluation framework away from being ideal are – the lack of connection between the monitoring and evaluation framework of Official Plan with the strategic plan and other plans; the lack of qualitative aspect of monitoring and evaluation; the absence of stakeholder classified indicators; the lack of efficient communication strategy; and lastly, absence of a research approach that identifies important research question that needs to be answered, with identification of appropriate research design and methods. In other words, rather than creating a monitoring and evaluation framework individually for different segments of planning, the idea is to create an entire framework of monitoring and evaluation under which all these different segments of planning can be monitored together.

Further, it should be noted that having the indicators alone does not mean a robust monitoring and evaluation process; the effectiveness of the indicators established is equally essential to make the process effective and efficient. However, identifying indicators is at least one step closer to a more efficient monitoring and evaluation process.

The Council strategic plan for the Region of Peel also performed quite well in this content analysis exercise. As mentioned above, the 2015-2035 strategic plan connects with the short-term Council strategic plans. These plans are created under the same theme areas of the long-term strategic plan – Area of Focus: Living, Thriving, and Leading. The Council strategic plan has further

connected with other plans, policies, and strategies adopted by the region under these thematic areas. Again, this is an excellent example for inter-relating the Council priorities within the existing framework of the region's priorities. Identification of the Council priorities without relating to the region's priorities might not bear as efficient results as in the case of the aligned priorities.

The housing plan for the Region of Peel seems to be an outlier than all the other plans. The housing plan performed relatively low as compared to other plans. Although the housing plan has identified measurable policies with assigned priorities, the plan has not set up the targets. However, the plan set up timelines in the range of short-term change action and fundamental/long-term change action, but again the plan misses on identifying deadlines on these short-term and long-term change action items.

Further, the plan has connected with other plans along with delegating the task of monitoring and evaluation. Beyond this, there are no ounces of monitoring and evaluation aspects present within the plan. The plan has no section on monitoring and evaluation; the plan is silent on the identification of research design, methods, and appropriate indicators to measure the progress. Although the plan has connected with the long-term 2015-2035 strategic plan, it should not be a leeway from monitoring and evaluation.

Lastly, the plan has provided frequency to update on the progress annually, as it is the provincial mandate under the ***Housing Service Act (2011)***. It also talks about communicating the progress in the form of annual updates and website updates. However, a robust communication strategy is missing that connects with the monitoring and evaluation process, identifies the stakeholders' interests, and then communicates the results accordingly.

Regional Municipality of York

In the case of Region of York, the Official Plan did well by establishing measurable goals and policies with established targets. The Official Plan also linked these goals and targets with monitoring and evaluation at instances. The following areas of the plan contain measurable goals and policies with targets established: housing policies, growth management policies, sustainable

building policies, transit and transportation policies, and waste management policies. However, all the targets are quantitative in nature with no instances of qualitative exploration.

To monitor the progress on the Region's Official Plan, York Regional Official Plan Monitoring Report was created for the first time in 2014 and the second in 2018. The report contains 22 indicators of mostly quantitative nature. The report performed quite well in terms of content analysis and just lacked the following aspect: identifying stakeholder-specific indicators; a well-versed and tuned monitoring and evaluation research design that includes some aspect of a qualitative, periodic communication strategy the tailor-made outcomes to the relevant stakeholder.

Further, the Region of York has developed a hierarchy of plans, policies and strategies with Vision 2051 and the Regional Official Plan on the top. Both plans are considered long-term vision plans. Under these plans, the strategic plans are prepared every four-year, congruent with the term of the Council. Every newly appointed council must identify the priorities, key activities and performance indicators and measures under the strategic plan. Further, the strategic plans are tuned with the Sustainability Strategy 2007 to ensure that all the actions integrate sustainability by default. This is quite a good approach to track the priorities and changes sustainably happening within the Region.

The Region of York 2019 to 2023 strategic plan performed quite well in terms of plan monitoring and evaluation. The plan has identified prioritized action items under classified segments to direct the growth. The plan has provided objectives, key activities, and performance measure for each action item under all the classified segments. The plan has also established a basic timeline to achieve the key actions and has asked to integrate the annual monitoring and evaluation of the strategic plan with other regional monitoring and evaluation initiatives. Further, the region has asked to annually monitor and report the progress achieved in accordance with the strategic plan to the Council. Content analysis-wise, the plan has covered all the major aspects, namely, directions to prepare indicators, forming research questions, and the preparation of research design with research methods along with creating measurable policies with targets. The plan only falls back on the aspects of inclusion of qualitative approach/methods and a robust

communication strategy to communicate the outcomes generated as a part of monitoring and evaluation exercise.

In the case of housing plan, the Housing Solutions: A Place for Everyone Phase 2 Plan 2019 to 2023 performed quite well in terms of plan monitoring and evaluation. The plan has identified a framework with goals, action items and performance measures, along with the mention of upcoming actions. However, the plan lacks to set up targets, it just has policies that explains the ways to measure the performance and progress. The plan also lacks the identification of research question with research design and methods with the inclusion of qualitative aspects and a robust communication strategy. The plan delegates the task to monitor and evaluate the progress annually in form of annual progress reports, beyond that the report is silent on further details about monitoring and evaluation.

Further, the Region of York has developed a hierarchy of plans, policies and strategies with Vision 2051 and the Regional Official Plan on the top. Both plans are considered long-term vision plans. Under these plans, the strategic plans are prepared every four-year, congruent with the term of the Council. Every newly appointed council must identify the priorities, key activities and performance indicators and measures under the strategic plan. Further, the strategic plans are tuned with the Sustainability Strategy 2007 to ensure that all the actions integrate sustainability by default. This is quite a good approach to track the priorities and changes sustainably happening within the Region.

Hence, the Region of York has taken sustainability seriously and has prepared a sustainability strategy that acts as a glue amongst other strategies and hence builds up the internal cohesion amongst the plans and policies of the Region of York. With the sustainability strategy in place, the region integrates all the sustainable efforts under one umbrella.

The sustainability strategy covers a diverse aspect of the plan monitoring and evaluation process in terms of monitoring and evaluation. The strategy has one entire chapter on plan implementation and monitoring with several directions. Under this chapter, the sustainability strategy talks about: identifying the timelines and success measures for each action statement

within the strategy; identifying quantitative as well as qualitative indicators to comprehend and measure the progress; combines the reporting of the sustainability with that of the Vision statement (Vision 2051), wherein annual reporting on indicators of the progress will act as a primary document to monitor the progress across the Region; developing a mechanism to annually report the progress achieved to the public and other stakeholders. Further, the sustainability strategy has integrated the Regional Official Plan and has commented about integrating the efforts made under other plans like the master plans. The strategy also talks about integrating the efforts made by the local municipalities. The approach is well thought to induce sustainability to function within all the dimensions of functionality in the municipality.

One important thing that came up on the surface is that the Sustainability Strategy under Vision 2051 delegated the annual task of developing appropriate indicators to monitor and evaluate to the Regional Internal Steering Committee by preparing the "Annual Report on Indicators of Progress." Further, the strategy asks to identify timelines and success measures for each of the action strategies and the qualitative and quantitative indicators of progress. However, when we look at the annual progress report, an identified timeline is missing, as well, the proper indicators are also missing. And hardly are there any qualitative indicators in nature. So, this is an example of mismanagement of the scope of work under two reasons, first, lack of ubiquitous monitoring and evaluation approach that ties everything together, and second, the delegation of the scope of work to other plans or departments.

Finally, the sustainability strategic plan also talks about hiring a third party to check the conformity of regional policy, operations, and procedures in compliance with the plan's action plan. This is another important aspect to focus on from the lens of monitoring and evaluation.

To comply with the policies within the Vision statement and the Sustainability Strategy, the Region of York prepares the following plans on an annual basis to monitor and check the conformity of the planning interventions with that of the plans and policies.

- Implementation and Monitoring Plan for the 2019 to 2023 Strategic Plan
- Vision 2051: Annual Indicators monitoring report

- York Region Annual Report
- Greening Strategy Achievements Reports
- Waste Diversion Report
- Growth and Development Review Report
- Employment and Industry Report

Thus, the Region of York has several plans, policies and strategies running within the Regional Official Plan and the Vision Statements. And some of the plans, like the sustainability strategic plan 2007 and the strategic plan, contain in-depth indications of periodic monitoring and evaluation process. However, the argument here is the lack of a ubiquitous monitoring and evaluation process that originates from the Regional Official Plan and flows into all these plans, policies and strategies.

The benefits of such approach are: increment in the efficiency by integration of efforts; an ability to see the progress of the entire Region simultaneously in all the aspects; enhancement in the cohesion amongst the plans and policies via constant monitoring and evaluation, as well, it will provide insights on discrepancies amongst different plans and policies, if any; enhance the legitimacy and credibility of the planning interventions, increase the accountability of the plan executers, which again will help to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the planning interventions.

Another parameter that came to the surface is that at times the annual monitoring and progress report is internal and can only be accessible within the Council and committee database, which is the place wherein the general public and stakeholders hardly enter. So, these annual progress reports created lay in the archives, as is the case with the Region of York, hardly accessible to the general public and stakeholders. So, portraying these annual monitoring and evaluation reports on the web page, wherein the primary plan documents are made available to the public, will provide the general public with increased access to review the progress on the plans achieved.

From the research perspective, while doing rigorous content analysis of a municipality's primary and secondary documents will require going through the web page and all the documents in the Council meetings and archives.

City of Ottawa

The city of Ottawa has quite an old Official Plan in place, and currently, the city is in the process of creating a new Official Plan. The observations in this research are subject to the older Official Plan. The Official Plan of the City of Ottawa is detailed and has provided minute directions for how the development should be carried out in the respective designated areas, details on land designation, direction on the preparation of the secondary plans and Community Development Plans. This level of detail helps when it comes to the implementation, as the stakeholders will have more clarity on what is expected out by the Official Plan. However, one missing aspect is the equivalently detailed monitoring and evaluation of the plan and other secondary community development plans.

Regional Municipality of Durham

The Region of Durham's Official Plan is quite detailed to guide each step's actions. As well, one important aspect noticed in the plan is that each section contains straight directions for the area/local municipalities to implement. Such an approach to direct the local municipalities increases the local municipalities' consistency of actions. The plan covers a wide range of policies on protecting and conserving the environment with minutest details like giving directions to monitor the surface water and the groundwater. The plan also gives straight directions to abide by other provincial policies such as the Oak Ridge Moraine Conservation Plan and the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan, the Greenbelt Plan, the Greater Golden Horseshoe Plan and the Provincial Policy Statement.

However, the Official Plan and the policies within performed poorly when it comes to monitoring and evaluation. The report lacks detail on providing the directions/provisions for monitoring and evaluation.

The Official Plan did mention the targets for the following: woodland targets; the ratio of jobs to population; intensification; supply of lands for housing and employment; rental vacancy rates; affordable housing; density targets about different land designations. There are no correlations between the policies and the monitoring and evaluation framework. The plan does not talk about the indicators to measure and monitor the progress nor provide clear monitoring and evaluation objectives. At places, the plan did delegate the task of monitoring the progress, but with no details on monitoring and evaluating.

Moving forward, the current Durham Region Strategic Plan 2020-2024 performed poorly compared to the older Strategic Plan 2015-2019¹⁰. In the case of the recent Strategic Plan, there are no ounces of how the municipality will measure what they are saying. There are no directions or provisions to measure the progress and the alignment of the progress with what has been stated here in the Strategic Plan. However, the older Strategic Plan is comparatively thorough when it comes to plan monitoring and evaluation, as the older strategic plan takes about establishing relevant indicators and preparing a monitoring report annually to check the outcomes and their alignment with the vision of this plan.

Further, the examination of the Region of Durham Master Housing Strategy leads to a similar result as the Strategic Plan 2020-2024. There were no details about the aspects of monitoring and evaluation, including the delegation of monitoring and evaluation. However, the recent report, “At Home in Durham: Five Year Review 2019,” did comparatively better by providing measurable goals/policies and targets at instances. The report in a couple of sections mentions delegating the work of monitoring and evaluation to local municipalities. Finally, the report contains an overall monitoring section which talks about the trends with no quantitative or qualitative analysis. Beyond that, the report lacks the design of monitoring and evaluation,

¹⁰ The more recent Strategic Plan 2020-2024 is considered in case of analysis. The older plan was only reviewed to understand the difference between both the plans qualitatively.

directions to monitor by the local municipalities, frequencies of monitoring and evaluation, and linking the goals and policies with monitoring and evaluation.

Regional Municipality of Halton

The Official Plan identified all the goals/policies with establishing relevant priorities wherever required. As well, the plan sets up measurable goals/policies with targets at places. The aspects of planning where the Official Plan established the targets are built-up area; development density; regional phasing targets; intensification; affordable housing; public transit usage; woodland and green cover. Again, some of the targets established were influenced under the mandate of the Growth Plan for Greater Golden Horseshoe. The argument here is that the plan lacks a homogenous approach to integrating monitoring and evaluation design since the beginning of the plan-making process. This facilitates the preparation of measurable goals and policies and the establishment of targets across the entire plan.

The Official Plan did acknowledge the task of monitoring and evaluation in almost every section and has established several advisory committees that are assigned to prepare several annual progress and monitoring reports. The plan really did good by giving directions to these committees to work with both the provincial government and other local municipalities wherever required. Thus, the Official Plan, in a way, delegated the task of monitoring and evaluation to these committees.

So, this is an important aspect to acknowledge that the Official Plan developed several advisory committees to prepare several annual or bi-annual reports working along with the provincial government and the local municipalities. As a result, the Official Plan itself did not set up the indicators, nor did it develop the research design and methods for the plan monitoring and evaluation. This has kept the monitoring and evaluation open for the committee to decide and implement. The Official Plan did mention some major areas and segments to monitor under the annual plan but did not elaborate on how to monitor. The only constraint under the plan is that the committees should present the updates on the progress via staff meeting reports. Further,

there are no specific directions given as to where and how to publish the outcomes derived from these annual reports; there is no identification of stakeholder-oriented outcomes.

Looking from another perspective, it can be interpreted that the establishment of the advisory committees sets up the organization's responsibility for the committee members to monitor the progress as asked by the plan.

Further, the Region of Halton has set up a regional Official Plan review project team and has undertaken a five-year-long review process, wherein the comprehensive review of the Official Plan is divided into three phases:

- Phase 1 – Directions (Completed in 2016)
- Phase 2 – Discussion Papers (Underway 2017-2020)
- Phase 3—Policy Directions (Upcoming)

Under phase 1, the municipality published a Regional Official Plan Review – Phase 1 report. The report is included in the content analysis. The report is quite thorough and has tried to provide all the minute details for upcoming phases. However, the report hardly talks about monitoring and evaluation. All the aspects of monitoring and evaluation like setting up measurable policies and targets, monitoring and evaluating indicators, and establishing monitoring and evaluation processes are absent. The approach to update the Official Plan is unique, and this report lays the foundation for the upcoming amendment to the Official Plan. And missing these important components of monitoring and evaluation in this report might not help improve the efficiency of monitoring and evaluation.

Further, the Region of Halton prepared Integrated Growth Management Strategy (IGMS): Halton Region to 2041 in 2019. The study overlaps in some of its scope with the second phase of the comprehensive Official Plan review. The IGMS covered in-depth forecast and analysis of future development by developing eight different scenarios to examine internally. This study also inculcated the changes in the provincial plans like the changes in Growth Plan for Greater Golden Horseshoe (2019) and other changes to the Provincial Policy Statements (2014). This strategy considers all the minute aspects that the region should encounter in the upcoming future and is

quite rigorous. However, when it comes to planting the seeds of monitoring and evaluation, the report remains silent. The report set up measurable targets in conjugation with the provincial mandates but did not establish a monitoring and evaluation process, nor did it established indicators to monitor and evaluate the trajected vision.

The Halton Region Strategic Action Plan 2015-2018 did comparatively well in monitoring and evaluation compared to its other plans and policies. However, the report has still delegated the task to monitor the action items to prepare an annual report that needs to be presented to the Council. The report did neither identify the indicators nor did it establish the monitoring and evaluation process. Further, the report identified some 21 objectives and has developed outcomes and action items to achieve those outcomes. It is good to prioritize these objectives and action items, but this will not ensure the overall development. In other words, it will not cover each and every corner as mentioned in the Official Plan.

So, once again, if there would have been a homogenous monitoring and evaluation process developed with the planning department, then irrespective of which Council is in place, or what are the priorities of the current Council in place, the development of the region would have been closely monitored and analyzed. One added benefit would be that the planning department can help the Council set more specific priorities using this evidence-based decision-making process provided by standardized and homogenous monitoring and evaluation process.

Further, exploration of Comprehensive Housing Strategy 2014-2024 Five-Year Review showcased better performance under monitoring and evaluation as compared to other plans. The review checked the progress, alignment and achievement against the targets for all the major housing policies in the Official Plan. Further, the review provides directions that further identifies outcomes with action items and measures. However, the review might have covered some qualitative dimensions. Apart from that, the report has covered all the major segments that come under housing.

And, as identified under the Official Plan to prepare the State of Housing report the Comprehensive Housing Strategy Review also delegated the task of regular monitoring and

update to the State of Housing Report. The State of Housing Report is all about the numbers and updates on the achievement of the targets, so it is not included in the content analysis. However, the same comment stands for the State of Housing Report that it lacks the qualitative dimensions of monitoring and evaluation.

So, another important aspect that came up to the surface by this analysis is that the municipalities monitor and evaluate in one form or another. However, the specific directions about monitoring and evaluation and the establishment of the indicators were absent in the Region's Official Plan. The Region managed to monitor all the major housing policies, especially with the targets defined by the channel of Comprehensive Housing Strategy and the annual State of Housing Report.

The argument here is that there are several dimensions/aspects to the Official Plan, or the development of a Region from housing to transportation to heritage to employment to community health and lifestyle. And all these aspects are interconnected in one form or another, and again with the dynamicity that the regions are facing in this rapidly growing economy, it is utmost necessary to closely witness the changes happening both in the individual aspects and the interconnected links that result into the cumulative development. And, if the planning department develops and inculcates a homogenous monitoring and evaluation process during the plan-making process, it should drastically enhance the efficiency to monitor and evaluate all the planning interventions in an interconnected fashion. To elaborate, a monitoring and evaluation process established with the start of the plan-making process will try to generate more efficient indicators across all the aspects of planning. So, there would not be a situation where transportation progress is monitored somewhere, and the progress of housing somewhere else and both of them lacks the interconnection. The indicators developed by integrating the monitoring and evaluation with plan-making should be such that it will open up the dimensions to monitor and evaluate the progress in an interconnected fashion, as is the case with the complexity of the actual on-ground situations.

Further, the importance of the qualitative aspect of monitoring and evaluation should not be ignored or underestimated, as the qualitative aspect is the one that will highlight the interconnecting nodes between different aspects/dimensions of planning. The qualitative

analysis will help to understand, say, for example, that how transportation has a specific effect on housing, environment and resource consumption. Further, the qualitative aspect of monitoring and evaluation will surface up some major underlying challenges that might hinder the progress as desired.

City of Hamilton

A good aspect of Hamilton's Official Plan is that the plan has identified all the surrounding plans, policies, strategies and guidelines, and the provincial plans, policies, and mandates in the Official Plan itself. It has provided sufficient information on explaining the links between all these plans and policies and the explanation on how these plans and policies will function together.

The Official Plan of Hamilton is quite cohesive. It has provided all the relevant cross-referencing within all the sections, so irrespective of what section is being read complete understanding of the respective topic can be grasped. Further, the plan has identified and directed the implementation of the policies with proper cross-referencing and specified implementation tools. Further, the plan contains an entire section identifying and explaining how to apply all the tools under Planning Act and other provincial legislation. And all the policies across the plans have precise cross-referencing about the usage of desired implementation tool. This way of cross-referencing enhances the ease to comprehend the Official Plan and can facilitate the implementation of the policies.

Another beautiful thing about the Official Plan is that the plan has bifurcated individual land sections into function, scale, prohibited uses, and design in the section of the land designations, wherein all the policies with the goals and targets are in the "scale" section. This way for bifurcating the policies makes it much easier to read, comprehend, implement and monitor the policies.

The plan has described all the policies with necessary and precise explanations in terms of monitoring and evaluation. However, the plan has only established measurable policies with targets for growth management, intensification, affordable housing, natural heritage, and forest cover policies. Other than these aspects, the plan has diverted the task of monitoring the

implementation of policies, as well, the performance to other supporting plans and Vision 2020 statement by saying –

“It is not the intent to develop and include specific monitoring or performance measurement programs as part of this Plan. The city undertakes performance measurement in a variety of ways including the development of monitoring programs through supporting plans, completion of provincial performance indicators, and the preparation Vision 2020 performance indicators and report card.”

And thus, the Official Plan does not talk anything about indicators and development of the monitoring and evaluation process. However, the City of Hamilton had Vision 2020 prepared since 1992 (and updated in 2003 after the amalgamation of the municipalities) in place, as well, the Growth-Related Integrated Development Strategy (GRIDs) was developed in 2006. Both plans, in conjugation with the provincial plans and the Official Plan, form the foundation of policy structure across the City of Hamilton.

The city prepared a Growth Summary Report 2006-2016 in 2017 as a generic report. The report is thorough from the perspective of plan monitoring and evaluation. It identified measurable policies with targets and milestones cross-referenced with the plans from where these targets have been adopted. Further, the plan has derived indicators to measure the process towards the achievement of the targets. Finally, the report has a separate designated section for implementation and monitoring to explain how the process is measured in the form of indicators.

An interesting aspect for plan monitoring and evaluation for the City of Hamilton, more from the perspective of performance compared to conformance, is that since 2015 it has adopted a Web-based Trust and Confidence Report to be updated annually. The city’s strategic priorities and the respective Council’s strategic priorities are identified as a part of this report. The report has also identified some 39 service profiles and has identified the indicators to measure the performance of each one of these 39 service profiles.

This is an accessible and transparent way of gauging the performance of different service profiles annually. This keeps the public and other stakeholders informed and helps to enhance the

accountability of government officials and city planners. However, the close observation of this web-based report revealed that the policies and priorities identified under the city's strategic priority hardly mention about plan monitoring and evaluation process. As well, the tracking of the performance under the service profile has more to do with documenting the progress and delivery of the services under the respective service area.

The City of Hamilton Housing and Homelessness Action Plan analysis revealed that the action plan was quite precise and has identified measurable goals and policies with targets and implementation strategies to achieve those targets. Further, the report also designated the task to annually monitor and report the update under the Action Plan to the Council. Also, it was identified that the report would run in conjunction with other higher-level plans and policies and other community action plans.

Finally, the review of the Council update on the Housing and Homelessness Action plan revealed similar results as the action plan itself. It was also observed that the report measured the progress by actually using these indicators.

Upon the examination of the GRIDs 2006 report, it was analyzed that the report contains more information on how the GRIDs was developed and covered lesser information on the end of monitoring and evaluation. The GRIDs 2006 report did contain policies and did identify the priorities with some measurable policies. However, the reports missed on the targets, milestones, linking the policies with monitoring and evaluation, establishing the indicators to measure and track the progress, and developing plan monitoring and evaluation process in general. However, the city prepared a Growth Summary Report 2006-2016 in 2017.

The City of Hamilton has done quite a lot of work regarding monitoring and evaluating the plans and planning interventions. However, as mentioned before, the only argument is that the Official Plan of the City of Hamilton straight away delegated the task to monitor and evaluate the plans to other plans. This has kept the door open to monitor and evaluate in the manner the department wants, which is good as well as risky in a way. The good side is that keeping the doors open to monitor and evaluate gives the municipalities and the planning department the freedom

to monitor and evaluate the plan in a manner which convenient as per the local on-ground circumstances. However, the riskier side is that keeping the plan monitoring and evaluation open might end up in partial or incomplete efforts to monitor and evaluate, duplication of efforts in other instances, missing on some of the major aspects of monitoring and evaluation or unequal monitoring and evaluation across different segments of the planning canon. Thus, some form of direction or guidance at the provincial level or within the Official Plan can help municipalities practice monitoring and evaluation in a standardized manner across all the segments. An added advantage of monitoring and evaluating all the planning segments in a standardized manner is that it helps develop evidence-based correlations between different segments and establish an overall picture of all the segments running in parallel, facilitating better implementation opportunities.

And again, in the case of the City of Hamilton, the city misses on some aspect of planning, with the primary being the standardized plan monitoring and evaluation process by using the research design and research methods. Further, the City of Hamilton, in their annual reports, five-year comprehensive reviews, and the growth summary report did establish measurable policies, targets (in alignment with the provincial mandates) and implementation strategies. However, these cover the major aspects of the planning like affordable housing, intensification, natural and forest covers, development in build-up area boundaries, development near major transit corridors, to name some. But an important thing to understand here is that this way of monitoring and evaluation is happening in parts and is losing the potential to look closer and deeper into ground situations of the local dynamics that hampers the overall growth in the desired direction and desired efficiency.

An important thing to keep in mind is that the City of Hamilton has done a phenomenal job in public consultation before preparing any of their plans. This is, in a way, a qualitative aspect that considers the inputs of the public. Still, again if this would have been combined with the standardized monitoring and evaluation process, the clarity of what to implement and what is being executed would have been increased.

Public consultation unboundedly reveals the local on-ground situations and can definitely help to establish sound plans and policies. The argument here is that what if the public were also involved in preparing the research design to monitor and evaluate the progress both qualitatively and quantitatively across all the segments of the planning. This will not only help to develop a balanced monitoring and evaluation system but will also help to gain public trust within the monitoring and evaluation process.

Regional Municipality of Waterloo

In the case of the Regional Official Plan, the plan is quite precise, to the point and directive wheresoever required. The plan has identified and described all the policies in the local context along with the identification of priorities where required. The plan contains measurable policies with the targets. However, it is limited to the growth management and development, including the intensification targets, transit-oriented development, affordable housing and development within the built-up areas. Also, the plan contains measurable policies for natural heritage, woodland and forest cover. The plan is silent on the targets and milestones for all other policies.

However, the plan does not directly identify and direct the responsibility to monitor and evaluate to other plans like the comprehensive improvement plan for housing, transportation master plan for transportation, growth management strategy, strategic priorities, and finally, the plan also directs to prepare a monitoring and evaluation report periodically to present to the Council and public.

An interesting aspect of the plan is that the plan has directed to prepare a database in partnership with the Province, relevant stakeholders, area municipalities and Grand River Conservation Authority to monitor the progress and alignment of implementation with that of the policies within this plan. Also, the plan states that not all but the relevant information from the database will be presented to the public whenever required. Finally, the municipality plans to use the database to make an informed decision during the comprehensive review of the Official Plan and other major plans.

However, the plan is silent on the identification and establishment of the indicators. The plan does not provide any guidance on the preparation of monitoring and evaluation research design or research methods. And finally, the report is silent on how the monitoring and evaluation outcomes should be communicated to the public and relevant stakeholders.

The Strategic Focus 2015-2018, created in conjunction with the terms of the Council in 2015, has performed quite well in public consultation. The strategic plan has inculcated the concerns and comments so the public into the strategic plans. Based on the inputs from the public in general, other stakeholders, and previous plans, the plan has identified six areas of major focus. And under each focus area, the plan has identified the objectives and action items to be implemented.

Further, the strategic plan takes about developing the Key Performance Indicators, in other words, the indicators established by the Region to monitor the performance quantitatively. It also talks about developing the Community indicators as the broad areas of measurement to track the patterns and trends generated within the community from the implementation of actions under this and other plans simultaneously. The strategic plan further states to annually present an update report on the progress to the Council and the community to check the alignment and progress of the plan in desired areas of focus.

However, beyond this, it does not specify about how the annual progress report will be made available to the community and the citizens in general. Also, the strategic plan, in general, does not provide any directions or guidance on how to prepare the indicators. Getting onto the update on the Strategic Plan in August 2018, the report only contains the objectives and the action items like a straight update on what has been done during the tenure of the Council and strategic plan. There are no ounces of indicators or monitoring and evaluation process.

Finally, Waterloo Region's Housing Action Plan for Households with Low to Moderate Incomes performed well to identify the priorities and cohesion with other plans. The plan has identified measurable policies with targets. The plan has also directed to monitor the progress and update the Council and Province about the alignment of the actions and the targets achieved annually.

Another aspect of the Official Plan is that the plan identified a firm countryside line beyond which development is prohibited. The Official Plan has precisely identified the line across the entire region. It has provided stringent directions to maintain the growth within these lines and directed the Area Municipalities to identify these country lines and abide by the directions with the Regional Official Plan. And the change to these countryside lines can only be made by comprehensive municipal review if the real need emerges.

The Regional Growth Management Strategy for Region of Waterloo was prepared in 2003. The strategy has identified the priorities to direct the growth, as well, it established some action items to be completed within the time of three years, that is, by 2006. In terms of monitoring and evaluation, the strategy only comments on identifying relevant indicators and identifying benchmarks and thresholds to monitor the performance regularly. Apart from that, the strategic plan is silent on the development of a monitoring and evaluation process that includes research design or research methods to track and monitor the actions homogeneously. Also, the frequency to monitor the performance and indicators is not specified in the plan, which means it's open for any interpretation.

So, the observations which came up to the surface here are the same as before. The Region has some form of monitoring and evaluation in place but not a standardized form. As a result, all the corners of the planning canon cannot be monitored homogeneously. Also, the municipalities are missing an opportunity to derive the inter-connected linkages that might optimize the implementation action and the related efficiencies. It might also help develop all the fields together to develop in every dimension possible.

Further, the lack of a homogeneously monitoring and evaluation approach keeps the door open to design policies that are open to subjective interpretation. These are the policies with no specific measures and targets defined and are the policies that lack the inter-relation with other dimensions/aspects of the planning. Such policies hamper the effectiveness of the implementation with no clear directions.

The analysis of the Regional Official Plan has identified all the relevant policies with appropriate priorities. The plan has also identified measurable policies with targets and milestones for growth management directed by the provincial mandates and policies. It includes targets and milestones for intensification, affordable housing, and growth directed within the build-up areas and other urban areas and corridors. As with other plans, the Official Plan also identified the measurable policies for protecting and enhancing the forest cover and woodlands.

The plan has directed to measure and report the progress achieved in terms of growth management to the Council annually. The Official Plan has also asked the local municipalities to annually report and update the progress achieved to the Regional Council on sequencing of Greenfield and progress on intensification, greenfield density and affordable housing targets.

Thus, the Official Plan has delegated and directed the task to monitor and track the performance of both the regional municipality and the local municipalities at the places mentioned above. The Official Plan also mentions developing effective indicators to monitor and measure the success of the plan. Finally, the Official Plan also asks to develop measurement and reporting tools in cooperation with the local municipalities to monitor and track the growth. However, the Official Plan is silent on how, what and when these tools and indicators will be developed to measure and monitor the progress on the policies.

The Summer 2019 Status report delineates good chunk on information about the initiatives and approach taken towards preparing the New Official Plan. The current update describes four major areas of ongoing research for the proposed New Official Plan: Urban Structure, Housing Strategy, Employment Land Strategy, and Land Needs Assessment. The report mentions the project overview, project status and project timeline for all four areas, as well, it states the details about consultants hired for through research the four research areas. Based on the report, quite rigorous research is going on to identify the needs of the population, plus, existing stage of land and infrastructure available, and then draft the policies to align the actions with both Vision 2041 and the provincial policies and targets.

In terms of monitoring and evaluation, the status report has not identified any indicators, nor does it take about developing any framework to monitor and evaluate. There is no mention of monitoring and evaluation even within the scope of work.

Heading towards the Council's Strategic Plan and the corresponding implementation plan for the term 2019-2022, the plan did mention about the importance of successfully monitoring the progress on actions towards the achievement of the vision. However, the plan only, in some instances, has proposed measurable policies with the targets and milestones attached. There are no indicators established, nor does it provide directions on how to monitor or measure the progress on the objectives and action items.

Finally, the 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan and the five-year review revealed similar results as with other municipalities. The plan possesses objectives with identified priorities and action items. Also, the plan classifies all the action times in a four-time range for achievement: initial, short-term, short to mid-term, mid to long-term. However, the plan lacks the development of indicators or homogenous monitoring and evaluation research design with research methods.

Apart from the Official Plan, the regional municipality has undertaken a Municipal Comprehensive Review towards New Official Plan and Growth Management Program in 2018. The review was built on Niagara 2041: Establishing a Growth Strategy, including all the recent changes to provincial policies. A recent update was presented to the Council in the summer of 2019 under the name of Niagara Official Plan Growing Region: Summer 2019 Summer Update.

Both the Niagara 2041: Establishing a Growth Strategy and the Summer 2019 Status Report on Niagara Official Plan were reviewed. Upon reviewing the Niagara 2041 Strategy, it was determined that the Strategy has more to do more with how the process was conducted to reach the collective consensus for future growth. The strategy did align the plans and strategies with the provincial policies and mandates, and it did finalize a strategy to proceed forward. However, in terms of monitoring and evaluation, the strategy is silent. The policy does not direct how the successful implementation of the actions be gauged and monitoring according to the vision and

strategy. There are no indicators established, nor is there any monitoring and evaluation research design or methodology developed.

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So, this leads to a set of open-ended objectives and action items whose achievement or implementation cannot be questioned. And open-ended action items can be achieved or not; can be efficient or not; can be in alignment with other plans or not; can be needed or not. How much to achieve, how many resources to be allocated, when to start, and when to stop are some of the basic questions that arise. The municipalities and the planners do perform these tasks based on their individual experience to the best of their capability, but even then, if things turned the other way, open-ended objectives and action items cannot produce evidence-based results to understand the reason behind the things turning the other way.

And sometimes, in such instances, rather than focusing on the cause of the situation, the attention gets diverted to the performer of the tasks, and in the absence of the evidence-based monitoring and evaluation mechanism, there is no shield for the executioners to cover themselves up against the accusations. As well, an opportunity to identify the underlying reason for deviating from the vision is missed.

City of London

The city of London prepared a new Official Plan recently. It got approved by the Council and the ministry in 2016, replacing the older Official Plan in order since 1989. In terms of monitoring and evaluation, the London Plan stands out as average. The plan has identified priorities across the policies, but the policies are not measurable and do not set any targets, milestones or timeframe to measure the progress. The only measurable policies with targets established are the policies

required by the provincial mandates to have targets set such as the growth management policies of intensification, development to happen within the build-up areas, affordable housing, and finally, forest and tree canopy cover targets.

Further, the Official Plan has delegated the responsibility to monitor and evaluate and states the need to identify relevant performance measures and indicators with public participation. Apart from this, the plan talks about creating London Plan Monitoring Program to check the alignment of the actions with the key directions identified within the plan every two years. Beyond, that the plan is silent of when, how and what will be included in the monitoring program and who will be responsible for making the monitoring happen.

As mentioned above, the London Plan has also encountered some problems with delegating other plans or other sections within the same plan. The “Our Strategy” section of the plan asked to check the “Our Tools” section for further details on the plan monitoring program. The final section of “Official Plan Monitoring” has delegated the task of identifying the details about the monitoring program to the “Our Strategy” section. So, all in all, the relevant place to look from these directions provided within the Official Plan is the “Our Tools” section.

Upon reviewing the “Our Tools” section, it was realized that the section has all the details for implementing and integrating the policies mentioned across the Official Plan. However, in terms of the monitoring program, apart from providing general suggestions, the section does not contain any framework, direction, or timeframe within which the policies can be monitored or evaluated or the policies that can help establish a monitoring program. So, this is a clear example of mismanaging the responsibility by delegating it to other sections or within the sections internally.

The Strategic Plan for City of London 2019-2023 is precise and straight in itself. It has identified five areas of focus, and within each segment, it has identified expected results and the strategies to achieve those expected results. In addition, with the start of each focused area, the plan has identified long-term outcomes that the strategic plan strives to head towards. In terms of monitoring and evaluation, the plan has not identified indicators, nor does it establish a

monitoring and evaluation system to track the changes happening. However, it mentions to annually report to the Council and to the Londoners about the progress and its impact on the community in entire.

So, the review of the semi-annual progress report on November 2020 was done under the parameters of this content analysis. The semi-annual update contains a huge excel file with all the tasks identified under the five areas of focus. The table includes the current status, target date of completion, accomplishments, and variance for each task identified. Under the status of tasks, the report uses different symbols to showcase the task's current status. The statuses are bifurcated as Complete, On Target, Caution, Below Plan and Not defined.

To further understand the dimension of monitoring and evaluation, the 2016 and 2017 Performance Report and 2015-2017 Impact Assessment Report from the previous Council term were reviewed. In terms of monitoring and evaluation, these reports outstand all other reports within the City of London. The performance report is quantitative in nature, with lots of key performance measures identified and measured against the target achieved. And all the targets achieved are also compared with the pre-determined targets to check the performance. Further, after completing each section, the performance report identifies some success stories from the same time horizon, challenges experienced, solutions to be implemented, and data limitations experienced.

Heading towards the Homeless Prevention and Housing Plan (2019-2023), the plan has identified policies with priorities, but the policies are not measurable and target-oriented. On the other end, the plan connected with all the other plans running in parallel. It suggested learning from the stories of the individuals housed and preparing success indicators for measuring the progress based on the input from these individual lessons learnt. This is an amazing example of integrating the qualitative aspect of monitoring to generate the quantitative measures for gauging the overall progress. Finally, the plan also talks about communicating the outcomes under the plan to the public and other relevant stakeholders annually, as well, to take the insights from these stakeholders to get a local perspective.

The Official Plan is comprehensive and has identified eight major directions as the foundation on which all the policies across the plan are prepared. In addition, the city has meticulously identified five frameworks that will decide the future and shape of the development happening within the city. These frameworks are Growth Framework, Green Framework, Mobility Framework, Economic Framework and Community Framework. The city has made these frameworks the base of all the investment and development happening within the city. This way of identifying different frameworks and then integrating all the actions in and around the framework can drastically enhance the cohesion of the plan and the efficacy of planning interventions.

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after completing each section, the performance report identifies some success stories from the same time horizon, challenges experienced, solutions to be implemented, and data limitations experienced.

The impact assessment on the other end is quite descriptive. It explains the visualized outcomes, and then it provides major and relevant key performance measures, indicators or initiatives that the city is working on. Following that, the plan explains all the measures, indicators or initiatives in detail with stating their current status of progress. At places, the impact assessment tries to connect the bridge that qualitative research can do. The report tries to analyse the actions under the lens of outcomes and then try to find the reasons that might have hampered the progress if that is the case. However, this qualitative aspect was not thoroughly implemented across the entire plan.

So, an important observation to make here is that the municipality has spent lots of energy when it comes to annually report the progress on the Council's strategic plan and visions. Further, the municipality has, in this case, the capability to fine-tune all the actions and minutely track and monitor progress along with checking the alignment with the outcomes defined within the Council's strategic plan.

So, the argument here is that if the same level of focus is developed over the planning interventions and if a homogenous plan monitoring and evaluation process is developed all the way from the Official Plan to all the master plans and strategies, the efficacy of the planning interventions will increase, the duplication of the efforts might be reduced, the municipalities will be in a much better way be able to interconnect the direct and indirect impacts of different planning interventions on one another.

Under the same Homeless Prevention and Housing Plan a long-term implementation approach was strategized. This long-term implementation approach is divided into four phases:

- *Phase 1 (2010-2013): Identification of project priorities and initiatives*
- *Phase 2 (2014-2016): Focused implementation of the strategic plan and action projects, in collaboration with stakeholders and community*

- *Phase 3 (2017-2020): Identification of sustainability components; Identification of new opportunities and challenges; Implementation of significant consultation and engagement process to renew the plan and create new momentum for next decade*
- *Phase 4 (2020-2024): Sustainability – Implement the plans developed during phase three*

Such an innovative approach towards plan preparation shall help the municipalities improve upon the efficacy of the planning interventions by identifying the sustainability components that help to drive change as intended by the policy framework in place.

City of Greater Sudbury

The City of Greater Sudbury Official Plan has identified policies with priorities but lacks measurable policies with attached targets or milestones. The only sections in the Official Plan containing the targets are the growth management section with intensification targets, development to happen within the build-up area, targets on mix-use development, affordable housing targets, and the percentage park lands' targets be achieved. Beyond these, all the policies are devoid of measures and targets.

Down the line, in terms of referencing other plans and strategies, the plan has successfully identified all the plans that run in parallel with the Official Plan and makes the implementation of the Official Plan happen. Also, the plan has asked to periodically monitor such plans and strategies with the changing times to check the relevance of these plans with the Official Plan. Accessibility priorities, achievement of housing targets, monitoring the supply of lands and housing markets, monitoring the intensification trends in the Built Boundary and Settlement Area are the major areas which the Official Plan states to monitor and report annually. However, further information or direction on the monitoring and evaluation is not provided.

Further, the plan is silent on identifying indicators and establishing a homogenous monitoring and evaluation process. Finally, the Official Plan has identified a list of studies and programs that can be conducted on a priority basis, that is, as and when required. Thus, the plan has delegated the task of monitoring and evaluation by stating to conduct these studies and programs, but beyond that, the plan is silent on further directions towards monitoring and evaluation. As

mentioned before, such open-ended statements on monitoring and evaluation dilute the possibility of conducting periodic and homogenous monitoring and evaluation.

The City of Greater Sudbury Strategic Plan 2019-2027 performed quite bad in terms of the content analysis. The report has identified classified segments to lead the development, however all the policies within are open ended with no targets established. The plan also lacks a section on monitoring and evaluation with provided directions and established research design with methods.

Both the Housing and Homelessness Plan 2013-2023 and its five-year update 2019-2023 outperformed other plans of Greater Sudbury in terms of monitoring and evaluation. Both the plans have identified measurable policies with priorities. The plans have identified key actions, the desired outcome, and how to measure the performance for each of those identified actions and their respective outcomes. Both these plans have identified the relevant policies from the Official Plan. They have developed a strategic framework to implement the key actions in congruence with the targets and policies of the Official Plan. Also, of all the measures identified across the key actions, some contain qualitative exploration, with the best example being the survey with the public and relevant stakeholders. One important aspect that the plan lacks is providing targets in conjugation with the key actions and the measures identified. If the targets had been identified, it would have created that sense of urgency to achieve those targets, which might have at least improved the efficacy of the planning interventions.

The City of Greater Sudbury has prepared a Planning Services Division Strategic Business Plan 2017-2022, unlike other municipalities. The specularity about the plan is that it has been prepared by the planning division and/or team themselves, and the report identifies tasks and priorities amongst the actions conducted by the planning team. The plan also connects with the Official Plan's vision and policies in every section identified within the plan, as well, it also connects with the strategic plan for the city. The plan also has a timeline for all the actions identified, and it states to annually report the progress against the achievement of the tasks identified within the plan.

However, an important aspect to observe here is that since the planning team has prepared this plan, there is an opportunity to look closely at what the planning team thinks about monitoring and evaluation. The plan contains the tasks that state to monitor and report annually on the trends of development and develop an annual report that describes the progress in congruence with the plan itself and the Official Plan. Beyond this, the plan is silent in terms of the monitoring and evaluation process. Among all the tasks, the report lacks the identification of the monitoring and evaluation process, along with the establishment of indicators and a homogenous monitoring and evaluation research design and methods.

Thus, if the monitoring and evaluation are not identified as a task amongst the list of all the tasks that the planning department does, the monitoring and evaluation approach that this research is talking about needs to be conveyed to the departments. So that once the department understands the importance of this approach, they can inculcate the approach in their planning canon.

County of Oxford

The County of Oxford Official Plan has clearly identified policies with appropriate priorities. The plan is quite descriptive and goes into all the details about the protection, designation and maintenance of the vast agricultural land that the county possesses. In addition, the plan has also identified the land-use policies individually for the Rural Settlement Areas, City of Woodstock and Town of Tillsonburg, making it lengthy.

The plan has only identified the measurable policies with targets for residential intensification, range of mix design housing, affordable housing, and increment in forest cover at the end of monitoring and evaluation. These policies do not contain a timeline for achieving the targets, which makes the policies open-ended. And as mentioned before, the open-ended policies retards the efficacy of both the implementation and monitoring /evaluation.

Further, the policies identified within the plan are not linked with monitoring and evaluation, as well the plan does not provide any further directions on how to monitor or evaluate. The plan talks about identifying indicators at two places, but no further guidance or direction is provided

on identifying and then utilizing those indicators. The plan is also silent on identifying research design or research methods for monitoring and evaluation. Finally, within the section on public participation, the plan identifies to include public and individuals from special groups at the time of monitoring and evaluation. But again, how exactly the public will be involved in the phase of monitoring is not clarified.

In terms of cohesion, the Official Plan has successfully identified and directed other strategies and plans to help implement the policies within the plan. One adorable aspect of the Official Plan is that the plan has clearly identified the principles of the Official Plan. And the plan has maintained the referencing of these principles across the plan in a homogenous fashion, making it clear and consistent to go through the policies across the plan. The plan has identified monitoring as a part of the plan principles, and under the monitoring, the plan has further identified the following aspects: Official Plan comprehensive review; a commitment to maintaining up-to-date information; on-going monitoring to maintain the relevancy of the policies within the plan, and geographic information system. Finally, across the entire plan, the plan has identified the need for ongoing monitoring wherever appropriate. Having defined such principles makes it clear to comprehend the plan in a much better way.

The Strategic Plan 2015-2018 was reviewed, and it was determined that the plan has just identified the prioritized focus areas with no measurable policies and targets/milestones defined. Apart from that, the strategic plan lacks guidance or directions on monitoring and evaluating the action items identified under the focus areas. Nor does the plan identifies or establishes any indicators. Further, the plan talks about monitoring and reporting the service performance along with establishing key performance measures, but again is silent on further details about how frequently the reporting should happen; or how to determine the key performance measures; or how will the outcomes be communicated to the public and relevant stakeholders.

In addition, the reviewal of the progress report on the Strategic Plan derived results of similar nature. The progress report did include lots of activities placed within the identified focus areas. However, the update is just like a list of activities during the respective tenure. The progress report is devoid of targets, milestones achieved, efficiency and relevancy of the actions and

interventions, and last but not least, the challenges that came along the way with the mitigation measures identified to overcome those challenges.

Finally, the Oxford County 10 Year Shelter Plan 2014-2024 and the five-year review on the Shelter plan conducted in 2019 were reviewed as a part of the content analysis exercise. Both the plans have successfully identified the goals and policies with appropriate priorities. Both the plans have connected with the provincial mandates and other plans within the regional municipality. The plan has identified goals, objectives, desired outcomes, directions and targets. However, the targets are mere statements that ask to head further in the desired direction. The plans do not set up certain targets that need to be achieved in a pre-determined time frame.

Both the plans state and delegate the task to monitor and track the progress, but at the same time do not develop any monitoring and evaluation strategy or identify relevant indicators that can monitor and track the progress in a homogenous linear fashion. The plans at places guide how to measure the progress, but the nature of guidance is more like just registering the progress, not like getting into the analysis of how much targets is achieved and the factors that impede or promote the progress.

Lastly, both these plans do not identify the frequency of monitoring and evaluation and are silent on the outcome's communication strategy. The matters included under the part of public engagement are limited to the description of how the public was involved during the preparation of the plans and details on spreading awareness of the initiatives taken by the municipality. There is no development of any strategy to report the progress to the public and other stakeholders.

Another important aspect of the Official Plan is that across the entire plan for each set of policies identified within the organizational structure of the plan, the plan has provided a separate classification, in other words, sub-headings or phrases, that helps to identify what these set of policies will state. This type of dual-formatted classification really enhances the efficiency to comprehend the plan not only in terms of monitoring and evaluation but for the entire pool of diverse policies that an Official Plan comprises.

Moving forward to other plans, the Phase One Comprehensive Review for the County of Oxford was reviewed. The report contains details about forecasts and analysis of current land inventory in terms of the growth forecasts recommended by the Province under the Provincial Policy Statement. At last, the report derives results on intensification targets and land needs assessment. As a result of the nature of the report, it was not included as a part of this content analysis exercise as the report is more of a technical study that deals with the assessment of current land and the need for future land to accommodate the growth forecasts.

County of Norfolk

The County of Norfolk Official Plan has successfully identified the relevant goals and policies with appropriate directions on the priorities. As with most of the Official Plan, the plan has identified the policies with targets and milestones for provincially directed areas such as residential intensification, development to happen with the built-up area, affordable housing, and a range of housing mix.

Apart from that, the plan has provided several open-ended policies to track the progress and monitoring of different aspects of planning either annually or periodically or at the time of a five-year comprehensive review of the Official Plan. Also, the Official Plan has successfully cross-referred these policies amongst different sections within the plan. Thus, the Official Plan has prepared open-ended policies on monitoring and has delegated the task to monitor without providing guidance or identifying further details.

Finally, apart from identifying a separate section for implementation and monitoring and identifying the general monitoring objectives, the plan is silent. The plan is devoid of guidance on preparing the indicators and/or establishing a standard monitoring and evaluation research design with appropriate research methods. One good thing about the plan is that the plan in its monitoring section had re-identified all the aspects of planning to be monitored annually. Have a checklist of what needs to be identified annually surely facilitates and gives clarity in terms of comprehending the plan.

After the Official Plan, a review of the Norfolk County Council Strategic Priorities 2019-2022 was conducted. Norfolk county's strategic plan is a normal document with identified focused areas and initiatives under each focused area. The initiatives identified are not measurable. As well, there are no timelines or milestones assigned to these initiatives. The plan neither contains any section on implementation nor monitoring and evaluation with no research design or identified indicators.

On the contrary, the Housing and Homelessness Plan portrayed comparatively good results in terms of monitoring and evaluation. County of Norfolk clubbed the housing and homelessness prevention plan with County of Haldimand named as Haldimand and Norfolk 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan 2020-2030.

The housing and homelessness prevention plan has successfully identified measurable policies with targets, timeline and responsibility assigned. The plan has also provided specific directions on how to measure the progress towards each of the identified actions under the respective policy directions. The plan also contains qualitative measures in the forms of surveys and focused public communications. Such measures help to identify the local on-ground problems which the quantitative measures surpass.

However, the plan lacks the identification of homogenous indicators that can be recorded not only in the context of this plan but can also be recorded in conjugation with other related plans. As well, the plan is silent on specific research design and methods to monitor and evaluate homogenously.

An important observation here is that since the Housing Services Act (2011) has mandated the preparation of housing and homelessness prevention plan inclusive of an assessment of current and future needs, objectives and targets related to housing needs, description of measures proposed to meet the defined objectives and targets, and finally, description of how the progress will be measured. The Housing Service Act (2011) has asked to update on the housing and homelessness plan annually in form of staff reports and conduct a thorough five-year review on these plans. Such mandates from the end of the Province have compelled all the municipalities

to prepare the plans and to update the plans as per the mandate. And, as a result, of this mandate, in the case of the County of Norfolk, like most other municipalities, the performance of the housing and homelessness prevention plan is quite good in terms of monitoring and evaluation.

So, this can be inferred as an impact of the provincial mandate on the plan monitoring and evaluation for the housing and homelessness prevention plans. And, to continue with the previous argument on the development of homogenous monitoring and evaluation method in the form of guideline or direction from the provincial government, the example of housing and homelessness prevention plan provides strong evidence that provincial mandate can have a considerable impact on the way monitoring and evaluation can be conducted by the municipalities.

District Municipality of Muskoka

In terms of monitoring and evaluation, the Official Plan has set up the targets necessary to abide by the provincial mandate. As for most municipalities, these targets include intensification targets, targets for a range of mixed housing, development to occur within the build-up areas and affordable housing.

The Official Plan has directed the responsibility to prepare the build-up areas inclusive of the urban centers, nodes and corridors on the head of the area municipalities and has further asked the area municipalities to prepare an intensification plan to achieve the targets defined for intensification within the Official Plan of Muskoka.

Further, the plan has generalized the targets related to growth management and housing by stating that the targets included are to be achieved incrementally over a long-time frame of 20 years. In addition, the plan asks to monitor the growth trends periodically by coordinating with the area municipalities. So, in this case, the monitoring itself will be a mere track of the growth happening as the targets are diluted by generalizing the achievement to happen along the longer time horizon.

Adding to the previous point, the plan has further in the monitoring and evaluation section stated that the municipality “may prepare quarterly and annual briefings or status reports.” This open-ended statement will again reduce the probability of preparing such briefings or status reports.

A good aspect of monitoring and evaluating the Muskoka Official Plan is that the plan has provided in-depth guidance on preparing the Performance Checklists. The plan has provided further guidance to prepare the checklists that inculcate these major theme areas: land use, built form, transportation, natural and cultural heritage, energy use, green infrastructure, air quality, materials and waste, and public spaces.

Further, the plan explains the intent of preparing this performance checklist to help make improved decisions by interconnecting all aspects of planning under the web of this performance checklist. The plan further adds that the checklists will help to challenge the stakeholders to come up with improved solutions, will help to develop key criteria to promote best practices, will help to bring consistency in the reviewal of the development applications, will help to elevate standards by continuous assessment and improvement, and will enhance the clarity and transparency by communicating the assessments periodically to the relevant stakeholders and the public. Lastly, the Official Plan also encourages the area municipalities to prepare such performance checklists.

This approach is phenomenal because it connects all the dots of planning and further assesses all the criteria cumulatively. Thus, in other words, the plan has identified the initial framework to monitor and evaluate all the planning interventions under the performance checklists. Further, the plan has identified some of the major benefits of inculcating monitoring and evaluation discussed in the literature review section.

The only missing stone is that the plan has kept this approach optional by stating “the municipality may consider the adoption” and not “the municipality shall consider.” As a result of this leverage, the chances are that the performance checklists will not be created, that is, not sooner, at least.

Heading towards the Council's strategic priorities, the document is a collection of focus areas with identified strategies. Apart from the strategies mentioning to monitor and review the changes, the report hardly contains any monitoring and evaluation aspect. The strategies are not measurable and do not have targets and milestones to achieve. Further, there is no mention of indicators or development of monitoring and evaluation research design.

Lastly, the review of the District's Ten-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan 2020-2030 and an annual update was conducted. Firstly, Plan 2020-2030 contains all the necessary policies with identified priorities, but the policies are neither measurable nor have specified targets or milestones. In terms of cohesion, the plan has referred to all the important documents under the planning framework like the Official Plan, Growth Strategy and Community Consultation Reports. The plan has identified measures of success within, but the measures within are mere statements on how the housing as a whole will improve when the policies and action items within the policies are implemented. The plan is also silent on the directions or guidance for preparing a monitoring and evaluation research design.

Secondly, the annual update is only a list of achievements that happened within the respective year. The annual update does not contain any other information from the perspective of monitoring and evaluation.

Given the geography of the District Municipality of Muskoka, significant importance is given to monitoring and evaluating water quality indicators, preserving rural lands from development, fish habitat, woodland, and forest cover. The plan has identified setbacks for development in general and in special policy areas to preserve the lakes and their natural environment and habitat. And, in terms of monitoring, all the policies are quite directive, and all the development applications must abide by the policies to get development approval. In addition, several annual monitoring studies are running across the lakes and the shoreline to check the phosphorous content and preserve the water quality. Having such descriptive and stringent policies for the protection of natural habitat and environment in and around the lakes is necessary to maintain the geographic character of the municipality.

Moving ahead, the District Municipality of Muskoka has developed Growth Strategy Phase 1 and 2 since 2008. Phase 1 calculates and forecasts the growth both in terms of residential and employment. The phase 2 allocates by checking the available land supply and other constraints that will help the municipality to keep up with the growth. Both the phase 1 and phase 2 growth strategies are updated on a five-year basis to realign the ground realities with the visions and the provincial mandates. Both phases 1 and 2 were reviewed, and it was observed that reports are more of technical work wherein phase 1 goes down into detail considering different forecasts like permanent residential, seasonal residential, waterfront, and non-waterfront housing, employment, and affordable housing. The report considers the intensification and affordable housing targets in the growth strategies as well. Phase 2 report talks about the proper allocation of the land as a resource allocated for this forecasted growth and guides the area municipalities to designate growth properly. However, in terms of monitoring and evaluation, rather than updating the entire report every five years and reviewing the annual progress, the report is silent on all the other aspects.

An interesting aspect about the growth strategy that came up to the surface was that in the section on intensification, the plan has mentioned that the way it should be achieved is on a case-by-case basis, rather than going by the targets as mentioned within the Official Plan and to be followed under the provincial mandate. The plan has identified the opportunities and challenges for implementing the intensification policies. Given the market potential and other affecting parameters, it was advised within the Growth Strategy to achieve intensification on the case-by-case approach. Although such approach conflicts with the target-driven approach, the research behind it suggests adopting a case-by-case approach. So, the argument here from the perspective of monitoring and evaluation is that even if the municipality adopts the case-by-case approach, there should be a monitoring framework. Because in the absence of such a framework, the chances are that adopting a case-by-case approach might dilute the efforts towards intensification.

County of Huron

The Official Plan for Huron County is quite condensed, and the Official Plan has adopted a comprehensive approach rather than a directive approach. The Official Plan clearly states that all the policies within the plan are general and are to be followed as guidelines.

Apart from that, only a few policies are measurable with targets assigned. As in the case of other municipalities, intensification, affordable housing, a range of mixed housing and growth to happen within the designated build-up area policies.

A confusion that arises now is that if the plan is to be comprehended in the form of general guidelines, will these affect how the policies with targets are comprehended, as well will these dilute the ability to achieve the targets? So, in this case, further directions are necessary for achieving the targets by making things clearer for all the relevant stakeholders.

The plan at places mentions preparing further plans such as Natural Heritage Plan, Accessibility Plan, Archaeological Management Plan, and Huron County Cultural Plan. The Official Plan also delegates the tasks for several aspects to be considered within the local Official Plan.

Apart from these, in the final section of the conclusion, the plan considers the Official Plan as a live document and asks to periodically monitor and review the policies within to reflect the needs and aspirations of residents of Huron County. There are no indicators, nor is there development of plan monitoring and evaluation research design.

Further, the County of Huron Homes Strategic Plan 2016 was reviewed. The strategic plan is quite thorough, and it has identified goals with action items and objectives. As well, for each of these action items, the plan has identified the department responsible, the mode of measurement and the deadline to get the action time completed. However, the plan is silent on the specific monitoring and evaluation process this research focuses on, with no indicators nor research design identified.

The plan has identified focus areas with prioritized goals, policies, and objectives within the Housing and Homelessness Plan. However, the targets identified are open-ended and do not

contain a timeline or milestones. The plan gave directions on the preparation of the indicators. In the five-year comprehensive review of the homelessness plan, the annual reports prepared by the steering committee contain 15 provincially guided indicators. However, upon the review of the 2019 Annual report on housing and homelessness, no indicators were found. Such discrepancies reduce the efficacy of planning interventions and hinder the potential to unleash the maximum potential.