



Vision to action: Is your local government successfully executing its strategic plan?

Use this guide to evaluate your municipality's approach to strategic plan execution and ensure your organization's vision drives daily operations.

1. Alignment with the annual budget and bandwidth

A strategic plan requires dedicated time and funding. To move from aspiration to implementation, you must align the plan with the organization's financial reality and staff bandwidth.

- + Does your strategic plan inform the annual budget process, ensuring priority initiatives receive necessary funding and staff time?
- + When allocating resources, do you distinguish between funding for everyday services and new, high-impact projects that support strategic goals?

THINK: When reviewing the upcoming budget, how easily can stakeholders identify the financial investments that will support the community's highest strategic priorities?

2. Departmental execution and the management system

Operationalizing your plan requires a management system that connects citywide goals to departmental workplans and utilizes cross-functional teams to address the most complex challenges.

- + Are overarching strategic goals broken down into clear, measurable departmental work plans with assigned ownership?
- + Do staff at all levels understand how their daily responsibilities contribute to the larger organizational vision?

THINK: Does your staff see the strategic plan as an add-on task, or has it become an integral part of “how we work”?

3. Performance measurement and tracking

Defining success and measuring progress is necessary to maintain momentum and demonstrate impact.

- + Do you have a defined set of key performance indicators (KPIs) or metrics tied to your strategic objectives?
- + Do you have a tool/method for compiling and tracking KPIs in an easy-to-use and meaningful way?

THINK: How confident are you in the accuracy and relevance of the data used to track and report on progress?

4. Communicating and celebrating progress

Telling the story of your progress and celebrating milestones builds public trust and sustains organizational momentum.

- + Do you regularly share strategic plan updates, successes, and challenges with residents, the governing body, and internal staff?
- + Are you actively celebrating small wins early in the implementation process to build momentum and demonstrate that the vision is becoming a reality?

THINK: If asked today, could a staff member name one or two recent successes resulting directly from the strategic plan?

5. Adaptability and governance

Communities evolve, and unanticipated challenges arise, meaning organizations must remain flexible enough to adapt.

- + Do you have a clear process to evaluate new, unprioritized requests from the governing body to keep them focused on strategy rather than daily operations?
- + Do you conduct an annual review with the governing body to reaffirm priorities, update annual work plans, and adjust course as needed?

THINK: When unexpected disruptions occur, does your team feel empowered to adjust their approach while staying true to the core vision?

A strategic plan succeeds when it integrates into how your organization operates and informs important choices. We developed this short assessment to spark reflection and help you build a foundation for putting your plan into action to benefit your community.

We're here to help! Contact us if you wish to discuss how to assess or strengthen your implementation efforts.



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