

Characteristics of Plan Quality

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Internal characteristics

- **Issue identification and vision**
Assessment of issues, trends, needs, and opportunities. Vision of what the community wants to be.
- **Goals**
Reflections of public values and desired conditions.
- **Fact base**
Analysis of current and future conditions and explanation of reasoning. Maps and tables that enhance relevance and comprehensibility.
- **Policies**
Specification of principles to guide public and private decisions.
Sufficiently specific to be tied to definite actions.
- **Implementation**
Commitments to carry out policy-driven actions with timelines, responsible parties, and financing.
- **Monitoring and evaluation**
Measurable objectives and trackable indicators. Assignments made for monitoring.
- **Internal consistency**
Issues, vision, goals, policies, and implementation are mutually reinforcing.

External characteristics

- **Organization and presentation**
Plan is understandable for a wide range of readers. Executive summary; glossary; cross-referencing of issues, goals, and policies; clear maps, charts, and images; supporting video, CD, web page.
- **Interorganizational coordination**
Integration with other plans of public and private parties. Vertical and horizontal coordination.
- **Compliance**
Consistent with plan mandates from enabling legislation, other.