



Consensus Commission Meeting

October 24, 2014

Baseline Review | Objectives

- Establish a shared, factual point of departure
- Serve as a data source to draw on for options phase
- Inform the Commission and broader community of stakeholders
 - What does the local government universe look like?
 - How many? What types?
 - Who provides what service(s) and where?
 - What is spent on local government countywide?
 - What functional similarities (\neq duplication) exist?
 - How diverse are services and spending levels?

Baseline Review | What it's not

- An evaluation of effectiveness or efficiency
- A determination of what's "right" or "appropriate"
- A set of recommendations
- A justification for changing what currently exists

Baseline Review | Format

- **Section 1: Overview**
 - Who does what, and what it costs
 - Number, type and structure of local government units
 - Financial context for what local governments are spending, and on what
 - Historic context on how local government spending has changed
 - Background on local government revenue
- **Section 2: Government Profiles**
 - Focus on individual local government units (GPs and Special Districts)
 - Standard-format information on spending, services, taxes, budgets, etc.
- **Section 3: Service Profiles**
 - Focus on individual service areas
 - Who provides what and where within the County

Baseline Review | Setting the context

- Advancing the dialogue, not starting it
 - Strong foundation of efforts, esp. by local governments and elected officials who have pursued collaborative solutions to shared challenges
- Competitiveness remains an issue
 - Population flat to 1970, population declines not confined to the City of Syracuse, and CBP / Tax Foundation data evidencing more work to do
- Economic connections across region
 - Recognize the interconnection of the county's component units, esp. in commuting data

Overview | Structure basics

- 36 general purpose local governments in the County, serving approximately 468,000 residents
 - County (1)
 - City (1)
 - Towns (19)
 - Villages (15)
- Every taxpayer is served by at least 2 general purpose governments
- There are 37 unique combinations of government countywide
 - County + City (n = 1)
 - County + Town Unincorporated Area (n = 19)
 - County + Town + Village (n = 17)

Baseline Review | Spending basics

- Local govs collectively spent *\$1.8 billion* in 2013
 - Two-thirds was county government itself
 - The equivalent of 6% of regional GDP

	2013	Per Capita ⁴
County	\$1.21 b	\$2,584
City	\$325.99 m	\$2,253
Towns	\$176.41 m	\$546
Villages	\$75.74 m	\$1,583
Fire Districts	\$11.66 m	n/a ⁵
Grand Total	\$1.80 b	\$3,844

Baseline Review | Spending basics

- Total spending grew *40%* over the past decade
 - Compared to rate of inflation of 29%
 - Changes vary by level of government

	2003	2008	2013	Chg 03-13
County	\$865.57 m	\$1.10 b	\$1.21 b	+ 40%
City	\$229.48 m	\$280.64 m	\$325.99 m	+ 42%
Towns	\$127.38 m	\$170.58 m	\$176.41 m	+ 38%
Villages	\$57.69 m	\$82.20 m	\$75.74 m	+ 31%
Fire Districts	\$7.53 m	\$17.77 m	\$11.66 m	+ 55%
Grand Total	\$1.28 b	\$1.65 b	\$1.80 b	+ 40%

Baseline Review | Spending basics

- County spending is 68% of total, equals \$2,584 per cap
 - City spending is 18% of total, equals \$2,253 per cap
 - Town spending is 10% of total, ranges \$255-\$948 per cap
 - Village spending is 4% of total, ranges \$257-\$4457 per cap
- Range of expenditures, per cap costs reflect local government diversity
 - Different types and levels of public service (e.g. Solvay village electric)
 - Beware the “stories” behind the numbers
 - Do not necessarily reflect higher or lower relative levels of efficiency

Overview | Tax basics

- Property taxes account for approximately 18% of total local government revenues
 - 10% in City, 12% in County, 27% in Village and 66% in Towns
- And each of the towns and villages on its own accounts for 1% (or less) of the region's total local government expenditures
- But not all tax bases are created equal, so a "penny" or a tax rate "point" in the smaller jurisdictions equals less than the larger ones
 - County levy is spread on a base of \$27 billion
 - City levy is spread on a base of \$3 billion
 - Town levies spread on bases as low as \$120 million
 - Village levies spread on bases as low as \$12 million

Overview | Spending basics

- Largest functional categories:
 - \$267m | Social Services (entirely centralized)
 - \$147m | Sewer (largely centralized)
 - \$141m | Public Works (entirely decentralized)
 - \$88m | Police (largely decentralized)
 - \$66m | Public Health (largely centralized)
 - \$61m | Fire (entirely decentralized)
- Several materially large “other” categories:
 - Employee fringe benefits
 - Miscellaneous (incl. community college and sales tax transfer)
 - Debt service

Gov Profiles | Format

- Standard data elements for every general purpose local government in Onondaga County
 - Location
 - Executive / Legislative structure
 - Population (and rank)
 - Land area (and rank)
 - Density (and rank)
 - HHI, Households, Home Values
 - Expenditures: 2003, 2008, 2013
 - Property tax revenue: 2013
 - C/Y budget and property tax levy
 - Workforce size
 - Equalized tax rates
 - Budget fund structure
 - Spending per capita
 - Spending per square mile
 - Fund balance

Gov Profiles | Format

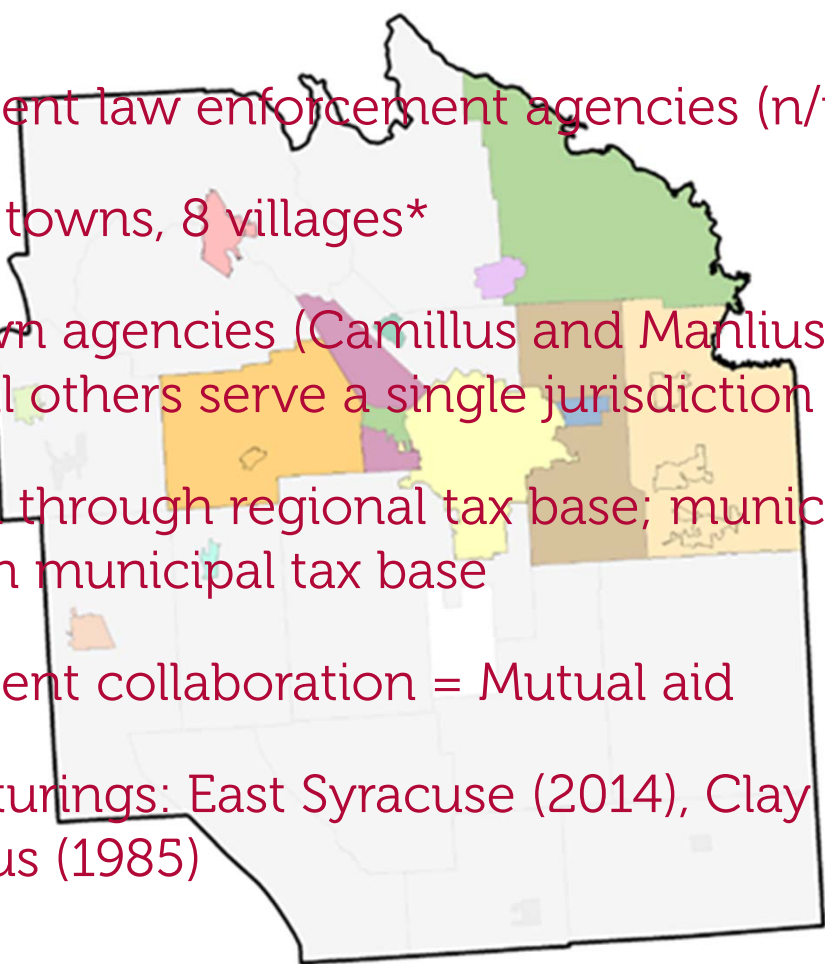
- Service menu and method of delivery
 - Delivering service,
 - Providing service, or
 - No involvement in service

Service Profiles | Format

- Services and service *providers* as the unit of analysis, as opposed to the governments themselves
- Overview of service area, listing of providers, presentation of service metrics and expenditures (where applicable)
 - Police
 - Public works and highways
 - Fire
 - Tax assessment
 - Justice courts
 - Water and wastewater
 - Sanitation and garbage
 - Parks
 - Libraries
 - Executive
 - Legislative
 - Clerk
 - Financial administration
 - Zoning and planning
 - “Centralized services” such as social services, public health and probation

Service Profiles | Police

- Local government law enforcement agencies (n/i NYSP) = 15
- County, City, 5 towns, 8 villages*
- County + 3 town agencies (Camillus and Manlius) serve multiple jurisdictions; all others serve a single jurisdiction
- County funded through regional tax base; municipal agencies funded through municipal tax base
- Local government collaboration = Mutual aid
- Recent restructurings: East Syracuse (2014), Clay (2008, 2011) and Town of Manlius (1985)



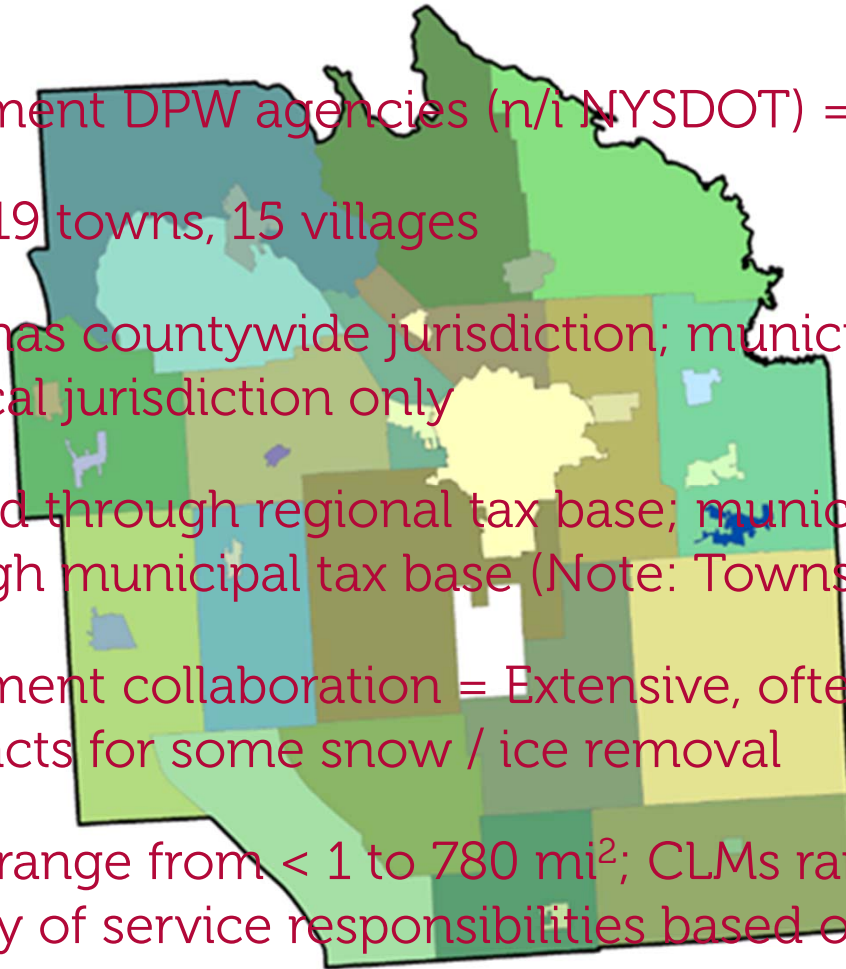
Service Profiles | Police

Service Providers	Service Area (mi ²)	Population (2013)	Pop Density (per mi ²)	\$ Per Cap (2013)	\$ Per Mi ² (2013)
Onondaga Co Sheriff	780.0	468,387	600	\$81	\$48,343
Manlius, Town	49.6	44,976	907	\$114	\$103,790
Cicero, Town	48.5	31,699	654	\$63	\$41,451
Camillus, Town	34.5	25,529	740	\$118	\$86,985
DeWitt, Town	33.9	25,733	759	\$208	\$157,882
Syracuse, City	26.0	144,669	5,564	\$473	\$2,630,291
Geddes, Town	9.2	16,946	1,842	\$127	\$234,282
Baldwinsville, Village	3.1	7,464	2,408	\$194	\$468,015
N. Syracuse, Village	2.0	6,916	3,458	\$191	\$659,897
E. Syracuse, Village	1.6	3,041	1,901	\$389	\$738,444
Solvay, Village	1.6	6,490	4,056	\$285	\$1,155,011
Skaneateles, Village	1.4	2,452	1,751	\$254	\$444,203
Jordan, Village	1.2	1,350	1,125	\$57	\$63,804
Liverpool, Village	0.8	2,315	2,893	\$326	\$942,992
Marcellus, Village	0.6	1,789	2,885	\$172	\$495,951

Note: Service providers are ranked according to size of service area. Onondaga County Sheriff figures reflect countywide jurisdiction, rather than only those territories in which the Sheriff is the primary responding agency. Costs per capita and per square mile include an estimate for employee benefits such as pension and health insurance.

Service Profiles | Public Works & Highways

- Local government DPW agencies (n/i NYSDOT) = 36
- County, City, 19 towns, 15 villages
- County DOT has countywide jurisdiction; municipal agencies serve their local jurisdiction only
- County funded through regional tax base; municipal agencies funded through municipal tax base (Note: Towns and TOV)
- Local government collaboration = Extensive, often informal, county contracts for some snow / ice removal
- Service areas range from < 1 to 780 mi^2 ; CLMs range from 1 to 794 miles; diversity of service responsibilities based on infrastructure

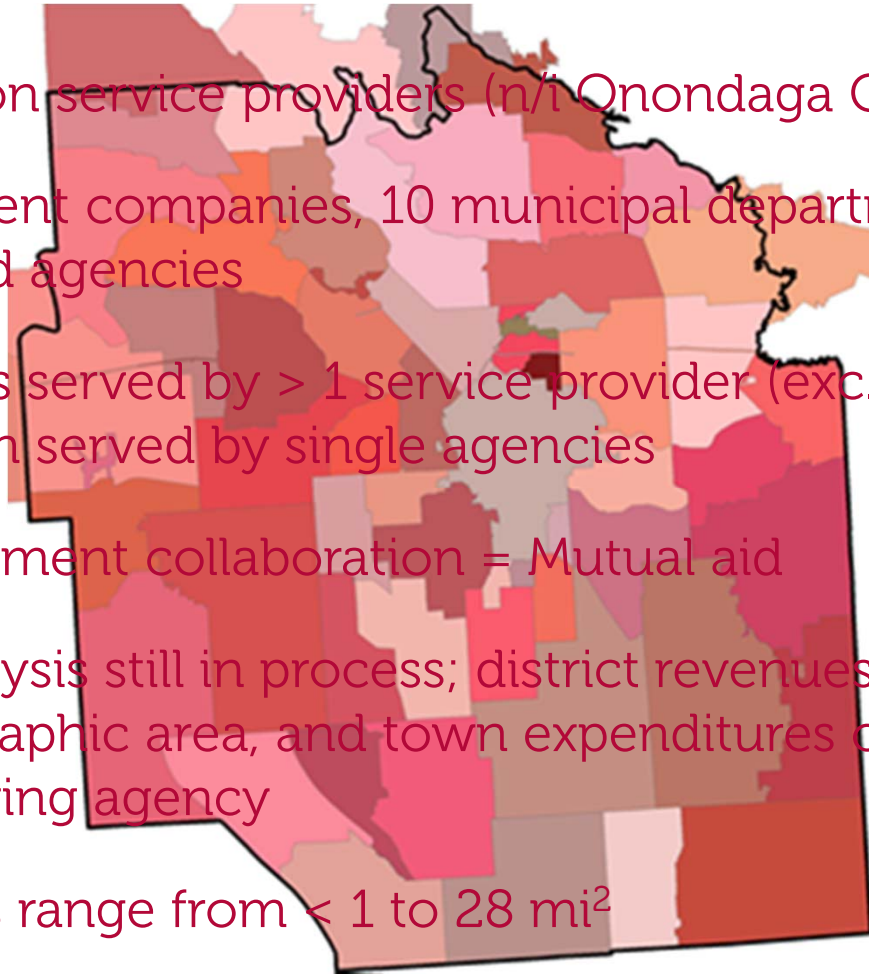


Service Profiles | Fire

- Multiple ways in which fire protection services can be provided and funded in NYS
 - Cities and villages can provide themselves with their own agencies
 - Fire districts w/ their own separate taxing authority (20 in Onondaga County, most with their own fire departments)
 - Fire protection districts created by towns, with service provided pursuant to contract between town and service provider
- A single fire agency may serve multiple geographic areas under different legal structures (e.g. municipal agency can serve fire district and / or fire protection district under contract)

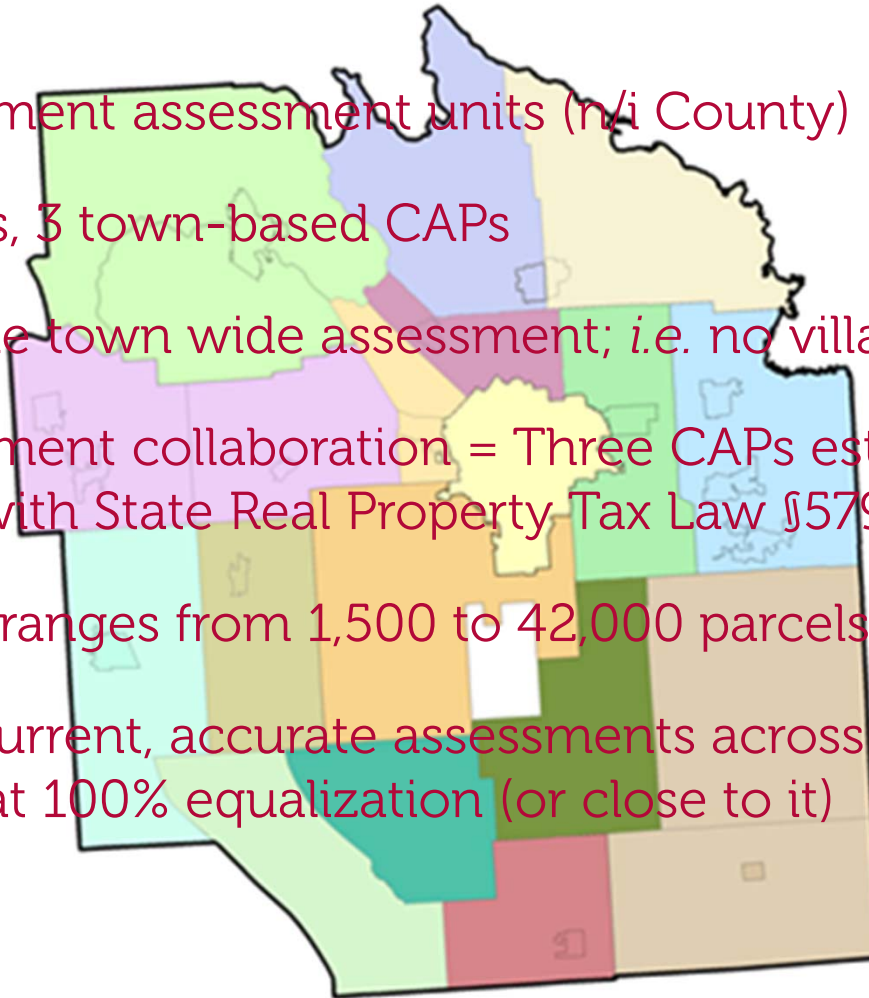
Service Profiles | Fire

- Fire protection service providers (n/i Onondaga County) = 57
- 28 independent companies, 10 municipal departments, 19 fire district-based agencies
- Every town is served by > 1 service provider (exc. Tully); Villages and City each served by single agencies
- Local government collaboration = Mutual aid
- Funding analysis still in process; district revenues often not broken out by geographic area, and town expenditures often not broken out by receiving agency
- Service areas range from < 1 to 28 mi²



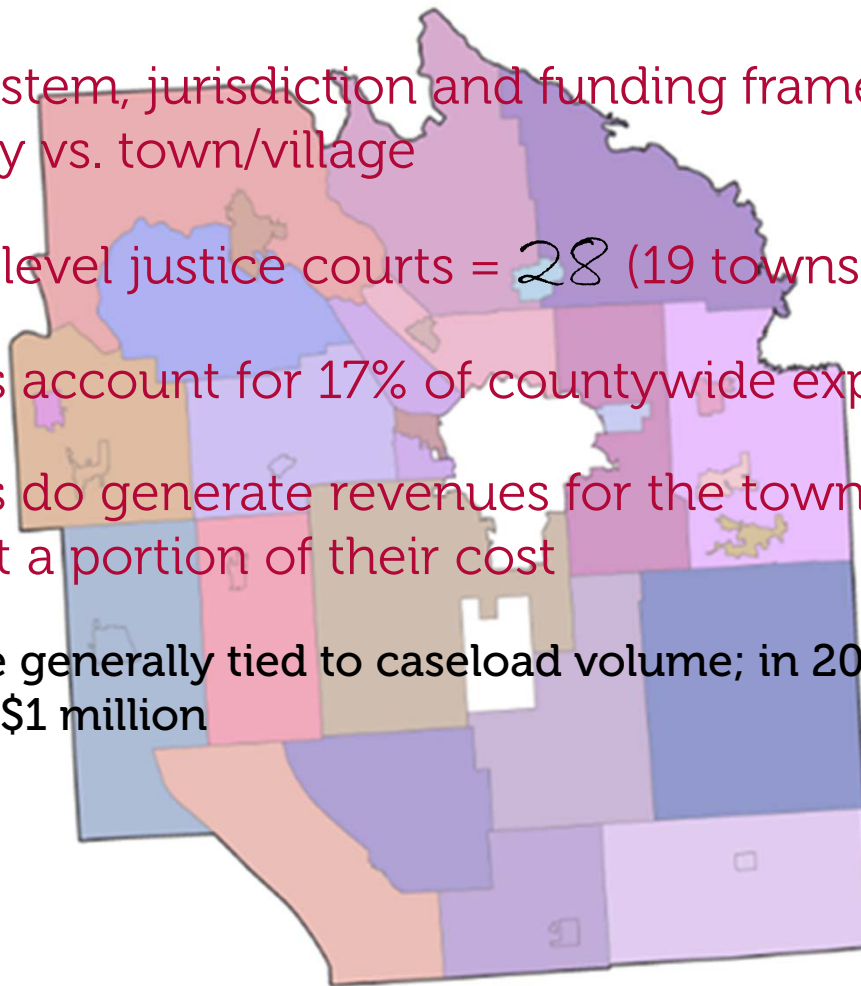
Service Profiles | Tax Assessment

- Local government assessment units (n/i County) = 17
- City, 13 towns, 3 town-based CAPs
- Towns provide town wide assessment; *i.e.* no village-based units
- Local government collaboration = Three CAPs established in accordance with State Real Property Tax Law §579
- Service scale ranges from 1,500 to 42,000 parcels
- Reasonably current, accurate assessments across county; most jurisdictions at 100% equalization (or close to it)



Service Profiles | Justice Courts

- Under NYS system, jurisdiction and funding framework is different for city/county vs. town/village
- Town/village-level justice courts = 28 (19 towns, 9 villages)
- Justice courts account for 17% of countywide expenditure
- Justice courts do generate revenues for the town/village which serve to offset a portion of their cost
 - Revenues are generally tied to caseload volume; in 2013, ranged from \$10,000 to > \$1 million



Service Profiles | Water & Wastewater

- **Water**
 - Metropolitan Water Board
 - Onondaga County Water Authority
 - City of Syracuse Water Department

} 90% of County residents
- **MWB:** Administrative arm of county water district; no direct retail; pumps, filters and purifies water sold to the region's retail water utilities
- **OCWA:** Regional retail water utility; public benefit corporation established in 1951 under Public Authorities Law; no taxing authority, funded through retail sales; also sells into municipal water systems
- **City WD:** Provider within City; also sells wholesale to certain municipalities

Service Profiles | Water & Wastewater

- Wastewater
 - Provided by County Department of Water Environment Protection (WEP) for most communities in county
 - Six treatment plants + 150 pumping station within consolidated sanitary district
 - Sewer district contains all or portions of 21 municipalities
 - Several villages maintain their own sewage treatment plants

Service Profiles | Sanitation

- Varied methods of service delivery
 - Municipally-provided = 5
 - Municipally-brokered / contracted = 20
 - No municipal involvement = 7
- Full cost not captured in municipal expenditures, since in some communities residents contract directly with vendors

Service Profiles | Parks

- Varied methods of service delivery
 - Stand-alone parks / parks & recreation department
 - Stand-alone recreation department
 - Captured within Department of Public Works
- Number of communities spending > \$100,000 = 12

Service Profiles | Libraries

- Six forms of library governance present across County, including:
 - “School district” libraries
 - Special “legislative district” libraries (NOPL in Brewerton, Cicero, N. Syr)
 - Association town / village libraries
 - Public town / village / county libraries
- Different implications for budgets, legal structure and municipal financial support
- Many functions essentially consolidated under OCPL, which provides administrative “backbone” for 32 libraries countywide

Service Profiles | General Functions

- Number of elected executives = 36
- Number of elected legislators = 174
- Number of chief clerks = 36
- Financial administration offices / functions = 36
- Zoning and planning functions = 36

Service Profiles | Centralized Functions

- Social Services
- Public Health
- Mental Health
- Probation



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