

Summary of **major** functions and services provided by local units of government in Kent County

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	Service/Function Provided by:								Additional Information/Comments
	Cities (9)		Villages (5)		Townships (21)		County (1)		
Common Mandated Services									
Tax Billing/Collection/Treasurer	X	FS	X	FS	X	FS	X	FS	All local units have a Treasurer. For cities and townships, the treasurer is elected or appointed pursuant to state statute. For the County the position is elected/Constitutional. Each local unit conducts billing and collection; some may already coordinate services. County collects taxes that are delinquent.
Elections	X	FS	X	FS	X	FS	X	FS	The County Clerk (Elected/Constitutional) is responsible to create the ballot and oversee election process in accordance with law. City Clerks and Township Clerks are elected or appointed by statute and are responsible for administering elections. All process voter registration and conduct trainings.
Assessing/Equalization	X	FS			X	FS	X	FS	Cities and Townships provide assessing services; City Charters may require that the position of an Assessor be created. KC is required by statute to provide equalization services to equalize property values for tax assessment purposes.
Public Safety Services									
Patrol	X	D			X	D	X	FS	KC Sheriff (elected/Constitutional) is required by state statute to provide patrols on County roads; some City/Twp Charters establish that the local unit is responsible for police, fire, and public safety services; some townships do contract with the KC Sheriff to provide additional patrol services.
Investigation	X	D					X	FS	KC Sheriff provides investigative services in township areas. Investigations within incorporated cities are completed by the local law enforcement. Some partnerships exist between local enforcement agencies in the areas of mutual aid, emergency response, etc.
Corrections							X	FS	State statute requires that the County Sheriff operate a Jail. The Sheriff has partnered with local units of government to provide jail beds for offenders that might otherwise be eligible to be held at a City-lock-up. Currently, no city operates a lock-up.
Prosecute Violators of Ordinances and State Law	X	C/O/D			X	C/O/D	X	FS	State statutes requires that the KC Prosecutor prosecute violators of state law. Local units of gov't are permitted by state law to develop ordinances and are responsible for enforcing ordinances.
Emergency Call-Taking/Dispatch	X	D					X	D	911 emergency call-taking and dispatch services have been consolidated and are primarily completed by the City of Grand Rapids and the Kent County Sheriff's Department; this has been done in partnership with the multijurisdictional Kent County Dispatch Authority.
Fire Services (Suppression, Investigation, Prevention)	X	D			X	C/O/D			Cities, Townships, and Villages are permitted to provide these services. The type or form of service that is provided may vary.
Emergency Medical Response/First Responder Services	X	D			X	C/O/D			Cities, Townships, and Villages are permitted to provide these services. The type or form of service that is provided may vary.

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Judicial Services									
District Court	X	FS					X	FS	The District Court has exclusive jurisdiction over the following types of cases: Civil suits involving \$25,000 or less, Adult criminal misdemeanor offenses punishable by up to one year's imprisonment, Civil infractions, Traffic violations, Landlord/tenant disputes, Small claims (involving \$3,000 or less), Land contract forfeitures, State law currently requires that the City of Grand Rapids, Wyoming, Grandville/Walker, Kentwood, and KC to fund/operate District Courts.
Circuit Court / Probate Court							X	FS	The Circuit Court- Criminal/Civil division has jurisdiction in all civil cases involving more than \$25,000 and in all criminal cases where the offense is a felony or a serious misdemeanor. The family division of the Circuit Court is responsible for all matters pertaining to juvenile neglect/delinquency cases, and matters pertaining to parenting time, child custody/support, adoption, divorce, emancipation, and other family related services. The Probate Court is primarily concerned with the protection of incapacitated or mentally ill individuals and their assets and the proper transfer of assets at death.
Specialty Courts	X	D					X	D	KC provides some specialty court services that are funded through grants for Child Support Enforcement and has a specialized business court; Grand Rapids operates a sobriety court; others
Community Development & Planning Functions									
Planning/Zoning/Neighborhood Improvement/Building Inspections	X	C/O/D	X	C/O/D	X	C/O/D			Cities, Villages, and Townships in KC perform their own planning and code enforcement services.
Community Development	X	D					X	D	The City of Grand Rapids and Wyoming are entitlement communities and administer federal funds. KC administers funds for non-entitlement communities.
Housing	X	D					X	D	
Economic Development	X	D	X	D	X	D	X	D	
Community Health Services									
Kent County Health Department							X	FS	
Prevention/Intervention/Health/Community Engagement	X	D					X	D	

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Culture & Recreation									
Parks	X	O/D	X	O/D	X	O/D	X	D	All local units have the authority to provide parks and recreation services. A multi-jurisdictional study is currently underway and is being overseen by a Citizens Committee.
Recreation Services (including afterschool youth programming, senior programs, and adult recreation/fitness services)	X	O/D	X	O/D	X	O/D			
Trails	X	D	X	D	X	D	X	D	
Golf Course	X	D					X	D	
Campground							X	D	
Pool (Splashpad areas)	X	D					X	D	
Public Services/Infrastructure									
Streets/Traffic/Lighting/Sidewalks	X	O/D	X	O/D			KCRC	FS	Cities and villages are responsible for providing these services. Sidewalks in townships are maintained by township. The KC Road Commission (a separate body from KC) manages and maintains county roads.
Sewage/Wastewater treatment plant (collection/treatment)	X	O/D			X	O/D			Cities of Wyoming, Grand Rapids, North Kent Sewer Authority.
Water Services: Treatment, Distribution, Billing	X	O/D			X	O/D			
Cemetery	X	O	X	FS	X	FS			Services are provided by both cities, villages, and townships. Some maybe Enterprise Funds.
Refuse Removal/Collection	X	O/D							
Storm Water Management	X	C/O/D	X	C/O/D	X	C/O/D	X	FS	The County Drain Commission (Elected/Statutory) is responsible for maintaining in-land lake levels and all county drains. Cities and villages maintain their own drains. Townships perform stormwater regulation.

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Policy Makers/Administration					
Administrative Services	In general, these services must be provided in support of local government operations.				In general, there is no defined method for providing the services. In some cases, there are designated elected/appointed officials that are responsible for these functions (City Comptroller/Twp. Treasurer, County Treasurer). In some municipalities, the City Charter may require the creation of a Civil Service Board.
Information Technology					
Legal Services/Corporate Counsel					
Human Resources/Civil Service Board/Labor Relations/Classification/Compensation/Workforce Development & Diversity					
Benefits/Retirement					
Risk Management					
Budget					
Accounting/Annual Audit					
Purchasing					
Facilities Management/Engineering					
Vehicle Maintenance/Fleet Management					
Printing/Duplication Services					

Sources;

MuniCode. www.municode.com

City of Grand Rapids Memo dated 9/15/2009. "Analysis of City Services"

City of Grand Rapids Memo dated 4/14/2010. "Preliminary Fy2012 City Services Inventory"

Kent County Report: "Mandated and Discretionary Functions of Kent County Government" November 2010.

Michigan Township Association Publication: "Welcome to Michigan Township Government" 2005

Kent County, MI Shared Programs and Services Report.

Final Report of the Legislative Commission on Statutory Mandates.

Kent County Experience

Cooperative Efforts - Successes

- Human Services Complex
 - County/State/ACSET
- Convention Center
 - County/State/Private Sector/Grand Rapids DDA
- Reverse Auction
 - Initially internal to County; now expanded to other local units in Kent County
- Kent School Services Network
 - County/KISD/Foundations/School Districts
- Cooley Law School Public Sector Clinic
 - County/Cooley Law School

Cooperative Efforts - Failures

- PTAS
 - Property Tax Administration System (centralized)
- Jail Per Diem
 - Five of six core cities

Failures Reversed

- PTAS → BS&A
- Jail Per Diem → Mayors Opposition → Successful Corrections/Detention Millage Renewal

Benefits of Cooperation

- Generates wiser decisions
- Builds on complimentary strengths
 - Capitalizes on individual talents
- Stimulates creativity
- Produces more “durable” (long-lasting) decisions
- Transfer of knowledge and skills
- Builds relationships and trust
- Fosters ownership of decisions
- Should result in increased service levels

Lessons Learned

- Partnerships or collaborations do not have to be equal . . . They have to be **fair***
- Collaborations may **not** save money . . . At least initially . . . And **will probably** require significant up-front investment.
- Collaboration doesn't just happen
 - It takes **time**
 - It is a **process**, not an event
- Recognize that a collaboration or partnership **may not** work
 - Egos
 - Control
 - Funding
 - Political Environment

Issues Related to Regional Collaboration/Consolidation

Technical

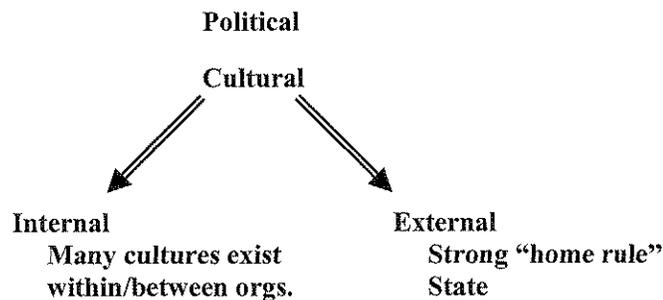
- **Hardware Platforms**
 - Avaya v Cisco
- **Software Platforms**
 - Microsoft v Novell
- **Applications**
 - PeopleSoft v New World

Operational

- **Missions and functions**
- **Policies/Procedures**
- **Collective Bargaining Agreements**
- **Historical practices**

Statutory

- **PA 7 of 1967 (Urban Cooperation Act)**
- **PA 8 of 1967 (Intergovernmental Transfers of Functions and Responsibilities Act)**
- **PA 312 of 1969 (Binding Arbitration)**
- **PA 292 of 1989 (Metropolitan Councils Act)**



Technology is the base level that has to be addressed before more collaboration takes place. There are hardware platforms (Avaya, Cisco, etc.), software platforms (Microsoft, Novell, etc.), and applications (PeopleSoft, New World, and the like) that may not interface well with one another. For instance, the City of Grand Rapids is moving toward a Microsoft-based software platform, while Kent County uses Novell; the City of Wyoming uses the New World application, and Kent County uses PeopleSoft. These issues have to be addressed first.

Second, each organization has its own **operational** identity. These are reflected in the form of missions and functions, policies and procedures, collective bargaining agreements, and historical practices. Counties are not big cities. While cities for the most part focus on physical infrastructure and public safety (police and fire services), counties add elements of justice, corrections, and human services.

Moving to the next significant layer, there are **statutory** restrictions placed on local units of government. Public Acts 7 (Urban Cooperation Act) and 8 (Intergovernmental Transfers of Functions and Responsibilities Act) of 1967, as well as the Metropolitan Councils Act (PA 292 of 1989) require certain things of local units of government that restrict or constrain the ability to consolidate and collaborate. Although the recent enactment of the Metropolitan Partnership Act (PA 258 of 2011), has done a lot to modify requirements to make it easier for collaboration to occur.

Then there are the **political** considerations that are taken into account when dealing with change, collaboration, or consolidation of services.

The biggest issue, however, is **culture**. Michigan is a very strong “home rule” state. That is, the Michigan Constitution, statutes, and history reflect a culture of local governance. Each local unit government has its own culture, and chances are that culture differs—at least to some extent—with a neighboring jurisdiction.