US Municipal Governments

Description: Brief Excerpt from Industry Overview Chapter:

Municipal governments provide services to residents, formulate and enforce local laws, make infrastructure capital improvements, and provide local planning. The US has about 36,000 municipal and township governments, 3,000 county governments, and 38,000 special purpose districts with combined annual revenue of about $1.7 trillion.

The form of municipal government varies widely. Most larger cities have an executive system managed by a mayor or city manager and overseen by a city council. Some smaller municipalities, especially in the eastern part of the country, are managed by a town board system overseen by a board of selectmen. Some towns in New England still decide many issues by town meetings.

Competitive Landscape

Demand for municipal services is driven by population growth and demographics of the local population. Because municipalities must operate with a balanced budget, loss of revenue results in loss of services, usually through job cuts. Cities compete with one another to attract major employers, sometimes by offering tax breaks and other incentives.

Products, Operations & Technology

Services that municipalities provide depend partly on the size of the town or city but typically include a school system, police and fire protection, street and highway maintenance, water and sewer services, waste management, and various social services. Additional services can include municipal courts, jails, hospitals, housing, parks, libraries, colleges, public transportation, parking, conservation, airports, electricity, gas, and health and welfare services.

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