

# Denver

## The Truth



Money Needed to Pay Bills  
**\$1.7 billion**



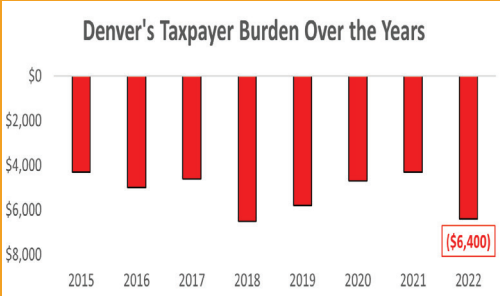
Taxpayer Burden™  
**\$6,400**



Financial Grade  
**D**



Ranking  
**50 out of 75**



## Financial State of Denver

Denver's financial condition continued to worsen by \$575 million, with a Taxpayer Burden™ of \$6,400, earning it a "D" grade from Truth in Accounting.

According to the city's 2022 financial report, the city continued to spend federal COVID-19 relief funds, and as the U.S. economy reopened, the city took in additional tax revenue. Such economic gains were offset by increases in the city's pension liability. Over the past few years, investment market values have swung dramatically. In 2022, this volatility negatively impacted the city's pension investments and its financial condition, which demonstrates the risk to taxpayers when their city offers defined pension benefits to its employees.

Denver had set aside only 71 cents for every dollar of promised pension benefits and only 25 cents for every dollar of promised retiree health care benefits.

It is important to note that continued market fluctuations, changing investment values, decreased COVID relief funds, and a stabilizing economy that may slow tax collections, could worsen Denver's financial health further. City officials should try to reduce the Taxpayer Burden by following the recommendations in our 2024 Financial State of the Cities report which would bring greater transparency and accountability to city finances.

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[www.truthinaccounting.org](http://www.truthinaccounting.org) | [www.data-z.org](http://www.data-z.org)



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The data included in this report is derived from Denver's 2022 audited Annual Comprehensive Financial Report and retirement plans' reports. To compare prior years and other cities' financial, demographic, and economic information, go to [Data-Z.org](http://Data-Z.org).

# Denver's Financial Breakdown

## Fast Facts

- Denver had \$6.4 billion available to pay \$8.1 billion worth of bills.
- The outcome was a \$1.7 billion shortfall, an increase of \$575 million from the prior year, and a burden of \$6,400 per taxpayer.
- Denver received COVID-19 relief funds and had an increase in tax collection, but its unfunded pension benefits increased significantly due to weak returns on pension investments.

## The City's Bills Exceeded Its Assets

Total Assets	\$20,736,215,000
Minus: Capital Assets	-\$11,081,622,000
Restricted Assets	-\$3,265,342,000
Assets Available to Pay Bills	\$6,389,251,000
Minus: Total Bills*	\$8,084,138,000
Money needed to pay bills	\$1,694,887,000
Each taxpayer's share of this burden	\$6,400

## \*Breakdown of Total Bills

Bonds	\$10,823,189,000
Other Liabilities	\$3,392,330,000
Minus: Debt Related to Capital Assets	-\$8,194,027,000
Unfunded Pension Benefits	\$1,811,777,000
Unfunded Retiree Health Care Benefits	\$250,869,000
Total Bills	\$8,084,138,000

### Grade:

**D**

Bottom line: Denver would need \$6,400 from each of its taxpayers to pay all of its outstanding bills and received a "D" grade for its finances. According to Truth in Accounting's grading scale, any government with a Taxpayer Burden between \$5,000 and \$20,000 is given a "D" grade.

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