



THE TRUTH

Money Available to Pay
Future Bills
\$765.6 million

Taxpayer Surplus™
\$3,000

Financial Grade
B

Ranking
5 out of 75

Charlotte Finances Among Best in Nation



January 2021

truthinaccounting.org | data-z.org

Financial State of Charlotte, North Carolina

Going into the coronavirus pandemic, Charlotte had some resources set aside. Based upon the city’s fiscal year 2019 audited financial report, Charlotte had a Taxpayer Surplus™ of \$3,000, earning it a “B” grade from Truth in Accounting. As a result of the current pandemic, Charlotte is expected to lose some revenue.

Unlike most cities before the crisis, Charlotte had more than enough resources available, \$765.6 million, to pay all of its bills, including public employees’ retirement benefits. This means that Charlotte’s elected officials have truly balanced their budgets. When broken down, the amount available to pay future bills resulted in a surplus of \$3,000 for each Charlotte taxpayer.

The surplus Charlotte had will help the city to weather the current pandemic and downturns in the market, which can cause the value of a government’s assets to fluctuate. But the uncertainty surrounding this crisis makes it impossible to determine how much will be needed to maintain government services and benefits.

The data included in this report is derived from the city of Charlotte’s 2019 audited Comprehensive Annual Financial Report and retirement plans’ reports. To compare cities’ financial information go to data-z.org.

Charlotte Financial Breakdown

Fast Facts

- Charlotte had \$2.8 billion available to pay \$2.1 billion worth of bills.
- The outcome was a \$765.6 million surplus, which breaks down to \$3,000 per taxpayer.
- Charlotte’s financial position worsened by 15 percent from the previous fiscal year mostly because the firefighters’ pension plan received less investment income and it lowered its discount rate, which resulted in a larger pension liability.

THE CITY’S ASSETS EXCEEDED ITS BILLS

Total assets	\$17,408,063,000
Minus: Capital assets	-\$13,867,198,000
Restricted assets	-\$711,298,000
Assets available to pay bills	\$2,829,567,000
Minus: Total bills	-\$2,063,944,000
Money available (needed) to pay bills	\$765,623,000
Each taxpayer’s share of this surplus	\$3,000

BILLS THE CITY ACCUMULATED

Bonds	\$3,333,544,000
Other liabilities	\$2,020,281,000
Minus: Debt related to capital assets	-\$4,294,817,000
Unfunded pension benefits	\$612,333,000
Unfunded retiree health care benefits	\$392,603,000
Total bills	\$2,063,944,000

Grade:

B

Bottom line: Charlotte had more than enough money to pay its bills, so it received a “B” for its finances from Truth in Accounting. A “B” grade is given to governments with a Taxpayer Surplus between \$1 and \$10,000.

Truth in Accounting is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit committed to educating and empowering citizens with understandable, reliable and transparent government financial information. To be knowledgeable participants in their government and its budget process, citizens need truthful and transparent financial information.