



LAKE FOREST FINANCES RECEIVE 'C' GRADE

May 2018
truthinaccounting.org

THE FINANCIAL STATE OF LAKE FOREST

A new analysis of the latest available comprehensive annual financial report found Lake Forest had a Taxpayer Burden™ of \$1,800, earning it a "C" grade based on Truth in Accounting's grading scale.

Lake Forest's elected officials have made repeated financial decisions that have left the city with a debt burden of \$11.7 million, according to the analysis. That burden equates to \$1,800 for every city taxpayer. Lake Forest's financial problems stem from unfunded retirement obligations in the form of pension and other post-employment benefits. The city has promised to pay out \$53.7 million in pensions and \$4 million in retiree health care benefits, but hasn't set aside enough money to fully fund them.

Lake Forest's financial condition is not only concerning, but also misleading as government officials have failed to disclose significant amounts of retirement debt on the city's balance sheet. As a result, residents and taxpayers have been presented with an inaccurate and untruthful accounting of the city government's finances.

Here's the truth:

\$11.7
million

Money needed to
pay bills

-\$1,800

Taxpayer
Burden

C

Financial grade

Data included in this report is derived from the city of Lake Forest's 2017 audited Comprehensive Annual Financial Report and retirement plans' actuarial reports.

LAKE FOREST FINANCIAL BREAKDOWN

FAST FACTS

- + Lake Forest has \$92.3 million available in assets to pay \$103.9 million worth of bills.
- + The outcome: A \$11.7 million shortfall and a \$1,800 Taxpayer Burden.
- + Despite reporting all of its pension debt, the city continues to hide \$3.7 million of its retiree health care debt.
- + Lake Forest's reported net position is inflated by \$8.4 million, largely because it has delayed recognizing changes to its net pension liability.

THE CITY'S BILLS EXCEED ITS ASSETS

Assets	\$362,541,000
<i>Minus:</i> Capital assets	-\$254,795,000
Restricted assets	-\$15,477,000
Assets available to pay bills	\$92,269,000
<i>Minus:</i> Bills	-\$103,930,000
Money needed to pay bills	-\$11,661,000
Each taxpayer's share of this debt	-\$1,800

BILLS THE CITY HAS ACCUMULATED

Bonds	\$48,513,000
Other liabilities	\$41,162,000
<i>Minus:</i> Debt related to capital assets	-\$43,463,000
Unfunded pension benefits	\$53,694,000
Unfunded retiree health care	\$4,024,000
Bills	\$103,930,000

GRADE: C

Bottom line: Lake Forest's Taxpayer Burden is less than \$5,000, so it has received a "C" for its finances from Truth in Accounting. While better off than many other cities in Illinois, Lake Forest still owes more than it owns.

Truth in Accounting is 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.