



# OMAHA FINANCES STILL STRUGGLING

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## THE FINANCIAL STATE OF OMAHA

Truth in Accounting's (TIA) new city report ranks and grades the 75 most populous cities in the United States by their financial health. Omaha ranks No. 49, earning it a "D" on TIA's grading scale.

Decisions by city officials have left the city with a debt burden of \$1.2 billion, according to TIA's analysis of its 2016 financial filings. That burden equates to \$7,700 for every Omaha taxpayer.

Omaha's financial problems are largely driven by long-term debt and runaway entitlement obligations in the form of pension benefits. The city has \$883.7 million in unfunded pension promises and \$400.9 million in unfunded retiree healthcare benefits. While Omaha has promised these benefits, little money has been set aside to fund them.

In 2015, government officials increased financial transparency by including the city's pension debt on its balance sheet. Unfortunately, almost 40 percent of Omaha's unfunded retiree healthcare debt is still not reported. With additional changes to accounting standards being implemented in fiscal year 2018, hopefully all retirement debt will be reported.

**49**

Rank

**\$1.2  
billion**

Money needed  
to pay bills

**-\$7,700**

Taxpayer  
Burden™

**D**

Financial grade

# OMAHA FINANCIAL BREAKDOWN

## FAST FACTS

- + Omaha has \$384.7 million available in assets to pay \$1.6 billion worth of bills.
- + The outcome is a \$1.2 billion shortfall and a \$7,700 Taxpayer Burden™.
- + Despite reporting all of its pension debt, the city hides much of its retiree healthcare debt. The city's total hidden debt amounts to \$156.8 million.

### THE CITY'S BILLS EXCEED ITS ASSETS

Assets	\$2,784,943,000
<i>Minus:</i> Capital assets	-\$2,209,400,000
Restricted assets	-\$190,810,000
Assets available to pay bills	\$384,733,000
<i>Minus:</i> Bills	-\$1,553,091,000
Money needed to pay bills	-\$1,168,358,000
<b>Each taxpayer's share of this debt</b>	<b>-\$7,700</b>

### BILLS THE CITY HAS ACCUMULATED

Bonds	\$1,195,326,000
Other liabilities	\$459,225,000
<i>Minus:</i> Debt related to capital assets	-\$1,386,044,000
Unfunded pension benefits	\$883,706,000
Unfunded retiree healthcare	\$400,878,000
<b>Bills</b>	<b>\$1,553,091,000</b>

## GRADE: D

Bottom line: Omaha does not have enough money to pay its bills, so it has received a "D" for its finances from Truth in Accounting. A "D" grade is given to cities with a Taxpayer Burden™ between \$5,000 and \$20,000.

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.