

COMMUNITIES IN CRISIS

More than half of Illinois cities get “F” grades for local pensions

Metropolis

2019 Grade: D

In 2003, Metropolis’s police, fire and municipal pension funds already faced a shortfall of **\$1.3 million**. That meant every Metropolis household, on average, was on the hook for **\$439** in future taxes just to eliminate that shortfall.

Metropolis began contributing more money – taxpayer dollars – to pensions in an attempt to make the plans healthier. Over the next 16 years, city contributions increasingly crowded out spending for public safety, roads and other core services.

	2003	2019	Change
City (taxpayer) contributions to pensions	\$0.28 million	\$1.28 million	Up 4.6X
Share of city general budget for pensions	2.5%	19.4%	Up 7.8X

Despite the ramp-up in city payments over those 16 years, Metropolis’s pension debts didn’t decrease. Instead, they jumped by 5.7 times!

By 2019, the shortfall in Metropolis’s police, fire and municipal pension funds totaled **\$7.3 million**. That means each Metropolis household, on average, is now on the hook for **\$2,686** in debt.

Everyone loses under Metropolis’s pension crisis:



Taxpayers are tapped out

Metropolis residents are paying more and more into a broken system. City taxpayers in 2019 contributed 4.6 times more to pensions than in 2003, yet city debts are 5.7 times larger.



Pension costs are devouring the city’s budget

Metropolis pension contributions have grown to consume 19.4% of the city’s budget, up from 2.5% in 2003. That’s crowded out spending on public safety, roads and other core services.



Metropolis worker retirement security is collapsing

The health of Metropolis’s local pension plans have worsened despite those increased taxpayer contributions. In 2003, the plans had 83.8% of the money they needed. By 2019, that had dropped to just 72.7%.



Metropolis’s crisis will only get worse

Metropolis has fewer active government workers available to help pay for a growing number of retirees. In 2003, there were 2.90 active workers for every pensioner. By 2019, there were 1.10 active workers per pensioner.

2019 GRADE



2003 GRADE



Metropolis receives a "D" grade for its local pension crisis

Local officials handcuffed by state pension mandates.

Wirepoints quantified the negative impact of local pensions by examining the finances of Illinois' 175 largest cities from 2003 to 2019. The analysis was based on ten equally-weighted metrics. Cities were given an A through F grade based on a 100-point scale (10 points per metric).*

Metropolis received a "D" grade in 2019. The city's total score dropped from 82 in 2003 to 64 in 2019, a decline of 18 points.

Metropolis was one of 64 cities to receive a "D" grade in 2019.

175 Cities – Summary Scores			
Grade	Score	Number of cities	
		2003	2019
A	≥90	4	0
B	80-89	35	1
C	70-79	81	8
D	60-69	48	64
F	≤59	7	102

Metropolis Key Facts		
City demographics	2000	2019
Population	6,482	6,129
Households	2,928	2,718
Median household income	\$25,371	\$35,855
City budget	2003	2019
General revenues	\$11,364,569	\$6,603,463
Total revenues	\$19,648,027	\$22,503,648
Total property taxes	\$408,211	\$1,738,354
Pension health (police, fire & IMRF)	2003	2019
Total accrued liabilities (benefits owed)	\$7,944,253	\$26,749,848
Total pension assets	\$6,659,951	\$19,448,151
Funded ratio	83.8%	72.7%
Total pension shortfall	\$1,284,302	\$7,301,697
Per household	\$439	\$2,686
Active public safety workers	29	22
Public safety pension beneficiaries	10	20
City pension contributions	2003	2019
City contributions	\$283,102	\$1,283,840
Per household	\$97	\$472
Percentage of city's general budget	2.5%	19.4%
Employees' contributions	\$174,928	\$234,538

Metropolis Score				
Metric	2003	2019	2003	2019
1. Police pension funded ratio	70.6%	68.6%	7	6
2. Firefighter pension funded ratio	65.9%	64.5%	6	6
3. Municipal (IMRF) pension funded ratio	108.0%	91.3%	10	9
4. City pension debts per household as a percentage of median household income	1.7%	7.5%	9	7
5. City contributions per household as a percentage of median household income	0.38%	1.32%	8	3
6. City contributions as a percentage of total budget	1.4%	5.7%	10	6
7. Ratio of city contributions to employee contributions	1.62	5.47	8	3
8. Percentage surplus/shortfall in actuarially-required city contribution (Police & Fire only)	-23.0%	71.9%	5	10
9. Asset-to-payout ratio (Police & Fire only)	20.8	21.4	9	9
10. Worker-to-beneficiary ratio (Police & Fire only)	2.90	1.10	10	5
Total score			82	64
Grade			B	D

*Wirepoints analyzed 175 of Illinois' largest cities, excluding Chicago, that have a local police, firefighter and municipal (IMRF) pension fund.

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