

COMMUNITIES IN CRISIS

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

Schiller Park

2019 Grade: F

In 2003, Schiller Park’s police, fire and municipal pension funds already faced a shortfall of **\$15.4 million**. That meant every Schiller Park household, on average, was on the hook for **\$3,672** in future taxes just to eliminate that shortfall.

Schiller Park 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	\$0.88 million	\$3.85 million	Up 4.4X
Share of city general budget for pensions	9.3%	18.3%	Up 2.0X

Despite the ramp-up in city payments over those 16 years, Schiller Park’s pension debts didn’t decrease. Instead, they jumped by 2.7 times!

By 2019, the shortfall in Schiller Park’s police, fire and municipal pension funds totaled **\$41.5 million**. That means each Schiller Park household, on average, is now on the hook for **\$9,649** in debt.

Everyone loses under Schiller Park’s pension crisis:



Taxpayers are tapped out

Schiller Park residents are paying more and more into a broken system. City taxpayers in 2019 contributed 4.4 times more to pensions than in 2003, yet city debts are 2.7 times larger.



Pension costs are devouring the city’s budget

Schiller Park pension contributions have grown to consume 18.3% of the city’s budget, up from 9.3% in 2003. That’s crowded out spending on public safety, roads and other core services.



Schiller Park worker retirement security is collapsing

The health of Schiller Park’s local pension plans have worsened despite those increased taxpayer contributions. In 2003, the plans had 57.4% of the money they needed. By 2019, that had dropped to just 50.7%.



Schiller Park’s crisis will only get worse

Schiller Park has fewer active government workers available to help pay for a growing number of retirees. In 2003, there were 1.81 active workers for every pensioner. By 2019, there were 0.98 active workers per pensioner.

2019 GRADE



2003 GRADE



Schiller Park receives an “F” 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).*

Schiller Park received an “F” grade in 2019. The city’s total score dropped from 66 in 2003 to 42 in 2019, a decline of 24 points.

Schiller Park was one of 102 cities to receive an “F” grade in 2019.

Schiller Park Key Facts		
City demographics	2000	2019
Population	11,850	11,621
Households	4,181	4,304
Median household income	\$41,583	\$54,099
City budget	2003	2019
General revenues	\$9,528,415	\$21,089,094
Total revenues	\$15,928,871	\$36,313,578
Total property taxes	\$5,000,837	\$10,232,250
Pension health (police, fire & IMRF)	2003	2019
Total accrued liabilities (benefits owed)	\$36,070,564	\$84,295,060
Total pension assets	\$20,719,147	\$42,767,383
Funded ratio	57.4%	50.7%
Total pension shortfall	\$15,351,417	\$41,527,677
Per household	\$3,672	\$9,649
Active public safety workers	58	59
Public safety pension beneficiaries	32	60
City pension contributions	2003	2019
City contributions	\$884,005	\$3,849,870
Per household	\$211	\$894
Percentage of city’s general budget	9.3%	18.3%
Employees’ contributions	\$386,163	\$672,304

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

Schiller Park Score				
Metric	2003	2019	2003	2019
1. Police pension funded ratio	43.6%	43.5%	4	4
2. Firefighter pension funded ratio	56.7%	53.6%	5	5
3. Municipal (IMRF) pension funded ratio	103.3%	79.6%	10	7
4. City pension debts per household as a percentage of median household income	8.8%	17.8%	6	1
5. City contributions per household as a percentage of median household income	0.51%	1.65%	7	1
6. City contributions as a percentage of total budget	5.5%	10.6%	6	1
7. Ratio of city contributions to employee contributions	2.29	5.73	7	3
8. Percentage surplus/shortfall in actuarially-required city contribution (Police & Fire only)	-23.8%	17.7%	5	10
9. Asset-to-payout ratio (Police & Fire only)	14.2	10.5	7	6
10. Worker-to-beneficiary ratio (Police & Fire only)	1.81	0.98	9	4
Total score			66	42
Grade			D	F

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

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