



REBECCA OTTO  
STATE AUDITOR

# STATE OF MINNESOTA OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR

SUITE 500  
525 PARK STREET  
SAINT PAUL, MN 55103-2139

(651) 296-2551 (Voice)  
(651) 296-4755 (Fax)  
state.auditor@osa.state.mn.us (E-mail)  
1-800-627-3529 (Relay Service)

## **\*\*\*PRESS RELEASE\*\*\***

### **State Auditor Otto Releases 2016 Town Finances Report**

**Contact:** Jim Levi, Office of the State Auditor, (651) 297-3683, [Jim.Levi@osa.state.mn.us](mailto:Jim.Levi@osa.state.mn.us)

**ST. PAUL (11/14/2017)** – State Auditor Rebecca Otto today released the Minnesota Town Finances Report, a comprehensive report on revenues, expenditures and debt for Minnesota’s towns. The report analyzes town financial operations for the calendar year ended December 31, 2016.

In 2016, there were 1,781 towns compared to 853 cities and 87 counties. The 2016 population estimates from the State Demographer show that 909,414 individuals reside in towns, representing about 16.4 percent of the state population. Town populations range from 11,078 in the Town of White Bear to 5 in the Town of Hangaard. Fifty-three percent of towns have a population of 300 or less.

Highlights from the report include:

#### **Current and Five-Year Trends**

- In 2016, Minnesota towns reported total revenues of \$317.1 million. This amount represents a 2.3 percent increase over the total revenues reported in 2015. From 2012 to 2016, total town revenues increased 13.5 percent.
- Minnesota towns reported total expenditures of \$310.8 million in 2016. This amount represents an increase of 9.9 percent over the amount reported in 2015. Over the five year period of 2012 to 2016, town total expenditures increased 22.5 percent.
- Debt service expenditures are the principal and interest payments on outstanding indebtedness. Towns had debt service expenditures of \$11.2 million in 2016. This amount represents a decrease of 7.8 percent from 2015. Over the five-year period of 2012 to 2016, debt service expenditures decreased 15.5 percent.

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- Outstanding indebtedness totaled \$57.4 million in 2016. This represents an increase of 4.9 percent over 2015. Outstanding bonded indebtedness totaled \$35.5 million in 2016, which represents an increase of 5.5 percent over the \$33.6 million outstanding in 2015. Other long-term debt totaled \$21.4 million in 2016, which was an increase of 3.3 percent over 2015. In addition, towns reported \$592,540 in short-term indebtedness in 2016, which was an increase of 42.6 percent over 2015.

### **Ten-Year Trends**

- Between 2007 and 2016, total town revenues in actual dollars increased 30.9 percent. In constant, or inflation-adjusted, dollars, total town revenues increased 9.4 percent over this ten-year period.
- Since 2007, the share of total revenues derived from taxes has increased from 67.8 percent in 2007 to 72.6 percent in 2016, and the share of total revenues derived from intergovernmental sources has increased from 17.7 percent to 18.7 percent over that period.
- In constant, or inflation-adjusted, dollars, total town expenditures increased 7.0 percent between 2007 and 2016. In actual dollars, total expenditures grew 28.0 percent over the ten-year period.

**For the complete report, which includes an Executive Summary, graphs and tables, go to:**

<http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=20171113.000>.

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*The Office of the State Auditor is a constitutional office that is charged with overseeing more than \$20 billion spent annually by local governments in Minnesota. The Office of the State Auditor does this by performing audits of local government financial statements, and by reviewing documents, data, reports, and complaints reported to the Office. The financial information collected from local governments is analyzed and is the basis of statutory reports issued by the Office of the State Auditor.*

*Rebecca Otto is Minnesota's 18<sup>th</sup> State Auditor. A high-resolution official photo is available for download at [http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/images/otto\\_hires.jpg](http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/images/otto_hires.jpg). To learn more about State Auditor Otto, see <http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=bio>.*