

TO: Personnel Board
FROM: Bill Wick, Human Resources Analyst
DATE: October 16, 2025
SUBJECT: Equipment Operator 3, Parks Division

On November 9, 2023, Parks Equipment Operator 3 Joel Halverson submitted a request to Human Resources for a position study of the positions in the Parks Division's Construction Section classified as Equipment Operator 3 in Compensation Group 16, Range 12. The submission indicated that the position study request had been discussed with supervisor Rich Bergmann on August 1, 2023, but that the request was not acted upon within 30 days. This study request was to determine if the job duties and responsibilities of the Parks Construction Equipment Operator 3 positions justified being moved to a classification in a higher range. Initially the study was put on hold pending the City's compensation study. However, it resumed in August, 2025. After a review of the position description, meetings with the incumbent employees; Landscape Construction Supervisor Rich Bergmann; Parks Operations Manager Chad Hughes; Assistant Parks Superintendent CJ Ryan, Interim Parks Superintendent Lisa Laschinger; and Public Works Team Leader Charlie Romines and upon a full analysis, I recommend the following for the reasons outlined in this memo:

- Create the classification of Parks Construction Specialist 1 in Compensation Group 16, Range 12;
- Create the classification of Parks Construction Specialist 2 in Compensation Group 16, Range 14;
- Recreate position numbers 1482, 1512, 1561, and 3176 as Parks Construction Specialist 2 in the new range; and
- Reallocate the employees (A. Ayres, T. Rosol, A. Champeau, and J. Halverson) to the new Parks Construction Specialist 2 range.

The Equipment Operator 3 classification specification has not been updated since at least 2010. A review of the classification specification describes the work as:

. . . skilled work in the operation of standard and specialized heavy gasoline, diesel, air and hydraulically operated equipment and attached mechanical and power equipment. Work is characterized by responsibility for the safe operation of assigned equipment and oversight of employees assigned to operate equipment. Work also includes the performance of heavy manual labor in various maintenance activities. Work is performed under general supervision

and is reviewed through personal inspection and observation of compliance with established work schedules and procedures.

This position is not part of an automatic progression series. Rather, placement as an Equipment Operator 3 is based on a competitive process and the needs of individual departments. [Emphasis added]

The Equipment Operator 3 classification is currently used for 11 other City positions, including a position in the Parks Division's Golf Program and multiple positions within the Streets Division's Forestry Section and Water Utility – it is recommended that the other Equipment Operator 3 positions be included in a future study to include Street Machine Operator 3 positions in the Streets Division and Street and Sewer Machine Operator 3 positions in the Engineering Division, as this current study will only focus on appropriate classification of the Equipment Operator 3 positions in Parks Construction.

In talking with the incumbents, they describe work that involves operating a wide variety of heavy equipment, including bulldozers, graders, skid loaders, and end loaders. The work requires skill in setting grades and moving and leveling ground. The operators have received training and have built athletic fields that require skilled grading and the operation of surveying equipment and laser levels for grading. The ability to build athletic fields has saved the Parks Division money in hiring external contractors for this specialized work. Furthermore, this group has built stormwater catch basins, and installed manholes and drainage piping, which requires knowledge of plumbing and concrete work, in addition to equipment operation.

Supervisor Rich Bergmann confirmed that the incumbents are expected to skillfully operate a wide variety of heavy equipment. He also noted that when hiring for this position, normally through an internal competitive process, that candidates from other agencies tend to not have experience with most of the equipment that this crew operates. Rather, they are maybe familiar with one or two pieces of equipment and then have to be trained on the rest. Mr. Bergmann also confirmed that the equipment has gotten more complicated over the years, especially with the specialized grading work that the incumbents are being asked to perform. Mr. Bergmann noted that prior to 2005, there had been a classification of Parks Construction Leadworker in CG16, R14 that was eventually deleted and recreated into the Playground Technician classification.

The obsolete class spec for Parks Construction Leadworker in CG16, R14 describes the work as:

. . . lead and skilled work in the construction and repair of landscaped park areas. The work involves directing staff in the operation of a variety of heavy equipment, ensuring safe and effective operation of large equipment, and

making on-site decisions relative to projects. In some cases, this position **also operates equipment.** Function **under the general supervision of the Landscape Construction Supervisor,** with **independent responsibility for job site progress and coordination.** [Emphasis added]

The obsolete class spec further describes examples of duties and responsibilities that were performed by the Parks Construction Leadworker as:

Oversee the activities of heavy equipment operators on a job site. Be responsible for project progress, coordination, safety, condition changes, grade setting and change, erosion control, equipment breakdown and repair, and scheduling and job assignments.

Direct and perform heavy equipment construction functions such as excavating materials for building poles, sanitary sewers and water pipes; grading for walks, roads, skating rinks, tennis courts, baseball diamonds, football fields, spillways, greens, fairways, etc.

Train new employees in the proper and safe operation and minor field repair of all types of heavy equipment including cranes, dozers, end loaders, scrapers, backhoes, dump trucks, tractors, etc.

Plan, assign, **oversee and inspect the work of assigned personnel.** Assign staff and equipment to projects and ensure job is completed properly.

Operate all types of heavy equipment and accept responsibility for operations on an assigned job site or project.

Perform related work as required. [Emphasis added]

While the obsolete Parks Construction Leadworker spec emphasizes overseeing activities of equipment operators and the Equipment Operator 3 class spec emphasizes equipment operation, there appears to be significant overlap in the related duties and responsibilities, in that the Parks Construction Leadworker was expected to perform heavy equipment construction functions which includes the specialized grading work that is described by the incumbents, while the Equipment Operator 3s are expected to train and oversee the work of lower level staff, including permanent Parks Maintenance Workers and Parks Workers and seasonal Laborers.

In reviewing all of the above, I recommend creating a classification series of Parks Construction Specialist 1 and 2 in CG16, R12 and 14, respectively, which will allow for new employees to be brought in at the 1 level, within the same range as the existing Equipment Operator 3 class, and to advance to the 2 level as a function of developing proficiency with the full range of assigned duties and responsibilities, with a general expectation that

advancement would occur within two (2) years. This is appropriate considering Mr. Bergmann’s observation that even when people come into the Equipment Operator 3 level, they generally require a significant amount of training to become proficient with the equipment that his crew operates. The series would allow Parks to hire and develop employees, and once fully trained, the employees would advance to the higher level.

Because the incumbents have all been performing the work of the higher level, I recommend that all their positions be recreated at the Parks Construction Specialist 2 level and the incumbents reallocated to the new level.

The necessary resolution to implement this recommendation has been drafted.

Editor’s Note:

Effective Date: 11/12/2023

Compensation Group/Range	2025 Annual Minimum (Step 1)	2025 Annual Maximum (Step 5)	2025 Annual Maximum (+12% Longevity)
16/12	\$63,749.14	\$70,721.04	\$79,207.44
16/14	\$67,235.74	\$75,681.58	\$84,763.38

Cc: Charlie Romines – Public Works Director/Streets Superintendent
 Lisa Laschinger – Interim Parks Superintendent
 Erin Hillson – HR Director
 Emaan Abdel-Halim – HR Services Manager
 AFSCME Local 6000
 Parks Construction Equipment Operator 3s