



Department of Employee Relations

Tom Barrett
Mayor

Maria Monteagudo
Director

David Heard
Fire and Police Commission
Executive Director

Michael Brady
Employee Benefits Director

David Kwiatkowski
Labor Negotiator

February 10, 2005

To the Honorable
The Committee on Finance and Personnel
Common Council
City of Milwaukee

Dear Committee Members: Re: Common Council File Number 041337

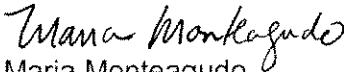
The following classification and pay recommendations will be submitted to the City Service Commission for consideration on February 15, 2005. We recommend these classification and pay levels, subject to approval by the City Service Commission:

In the Assessor's Office, one new position is recommended for classification as Property Assessment Technician, Pay Range 530.

In the Department of Public Works, Operations Division-Forestry Section, one vacant position of Landscape Designer, Pay Range 604 is recommended for reclassification to Landscape Architect, Pay Range 606.

Job evaluation reports covering the above positions, including the necessary Salary and Positions Ordinance amendments, are attached.

Sincerely,


Maria Monteagudo
Employee Relations Director

MM:pb

Attachments: 2 Job Evaluation Reports
 Fiscal Note

c: Mark Nicolini, Erick Shambarger, Marianne Walsh, David Kwiatkowski, Mary Reavey, Pete Weissenfluh, David Fortney, James Purko, Preston Cole, Robert McFadyen, Wanda Booker, Richard Abelson, John English, Paula Dorsey, Bill Mollenhauer and James Fields

JOB EVALUATION REPORT

City Service Commission Meeting Date: February 15, 2005

Incumbent: New Position Department: Assessor's Office

Present	Request
Title: New Position	Title: Assessment Technician
Pay Range: n/a	Pay Range: 530 (\$37,956-\$42,968)
Step: n/a	Source: Department
Recommendation: Title : Property Assessment Technician Pay Range: 530 (\$37,956-\$42,968) New Rate:	
Rationale: The level of duties and responsibilities of this position are consistent with those being performed by other positions in Pay Range 530.	
History of Position: This is a new position in the 2005 budget.	

Action Required:

In the Salary Ordinance, under Pay Range 530, add the title "Property Assessment Technician."

In the Positions Ordinance, under Assessor's Office, Systems and Administration Division, delete one position of Assessment Technician and add one position of Property Assessment Technician.

Background:

The department's request to conduct this study was received on December 4, 2004. Discussions were held with Mary Reavey, Assessment Commissioner, Pete Weissenfluh, Chief Assessor, and David Fortney, Systems Analyst-Project Leader. Mr. Fortney will supervise this position.

Duties, Responsibilities and Requirements:

The basic function of this position is to research technical data, create land descriptions and compute land information relating to property changes and ownership records within the City of Milwaukee for the Assessor's Office, other city departments and the public. Specific duties include the following:

New Position

Property Assessment Technician . . . #2

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- 25% Analyzes and processes documents relative to the creation of a parcel combination or division.
- 15% Enters and maintains ownership, legal, tax key, and address information in the department's computer system.
- 10% Assigns proper tax key numbers and descriptions to parcels involved in new subdivisions certified survey maps, condominiums, and street and alley vacations for combinations/divisions.
- 5% Verifies property descriptions on real estate transfer returns and deeds through various legal sources.
- 10% Meets the public and employees of governmental agencies on matters involving discrepancies in property descriptions and other related problems concerning real property.
- 5% Participates in intra/inter departmental meetings.
- 5% Maintains indices of new subdivisions, certified survey maps, and condominiums.
- 20% Assists the property records and sales administrative personnel with legal descriptions and property transfers.
- 5% Other duties as assigned.

According to the job description provided by the department, this position requires knowledge of title work and land descriptions, knowledge of state and municipal law regarding document recording and land descriptions, experience with computers, especially Microsoft Word and Excel, and possession of Wisconsin Department of Revenue certification as Assessment Technician within 6 months of appointment to the position. Related experience and college coursework are preferred.

Analysis:

This new position in the 2005 budget is the result of a transfer of mapping (GIS) functions previously performed in the Assessor's Office to the Department of City Development and DPW-Infrastructure Services. The department found that these functions could be better coordinated city-wide to eliminate redundancy and inefficiency. As a result, the position formerly performing the mapping functions, Property Records Drafting Technician IV, was eliminated and this new position was created to perform all of the duties previously performed by the Property Records Drafting Technician IV with the exception of the mapping function.

The department is expecting that this change will avoid the backlogs in the processing of land combinations and divisions that had been occurring over the past several years due to the high volume (approximately 300-400 per year). This backlog created problems for other city departments who use the information to create land use maps, issue permits, etc. Because many of the duties of this position relate to functions that require assessor certification from the State Department of Revenue, this certification requirement has been added to the job description. The previous incumbent was covered under a "grandfather" clause since she had been in the position at the time certification became a requirement.

The department is proposing that this position be placed in Pay Range 530. This pay range consists of a variety of technical positions as well as higher level administrative positions. These positions include Environmental Health Specialist I, Code Enforcement Inspector I, and Lead Risk Assessor I. These positions, which require a Bachelor's degree or equivalent, are

New Position
Property Assessment Technician . . . #3

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involved in the inspection, compliance and enforcement of applicable ordinances and state statutes in each respective technical area. A position in the Treasurer's Office, Customer Services Representative-Lead, performs technical research and analysis duties related to tax collection, responds to technical customer inquiries, and provides direction to others in the section. The position under study also performs some lead worker functions.

The administrative positions include Administrative Assistant III and Program Assistant II. The latter classification typically requires the equivalent knowledge and skill normally obtained with a Bachelor's degree and some Program Assistants II function as group leaders for other employees. The department has a Program Assistant II position in the same section as the new position that functions as clerk for the Board of Review and assists the Board of Assessors by preparing schedules, reports, and control logs of assessment appeals. The department feels that this position is comparable in level of difficulty and responsibility to the new position.

After comparing the overall level of responsibility and nature of duties performed by the position under study with other Pay Range 530 positions in the city, we concur with the department that this pay range is appropriate for this new position. The department initially requested a new title of Assessment Technician. However, this title already exists for positions in DPW-Infrastructure that prepare special assessments, maintain assessment records and perform other related duties. As an alternative, the department suggested the title of Property Assessment Technician which we feel adequately describes the position.

Recommendation:

We therefore recommend that this new position be classified as Property Assessment Technician in Pay Range 530.

Prepared by: Timothy J. Keeley
Timothy J. Keeley, Human Resources Representative

Reviewed by: Maria Monteagudo
Maria Monteagudo, Employee Relations Director

JOB EVALUATION REPORT

City Service Commission Meeting Date: February 15, 2005

Incumbent: Vacant Position Department: DPW-Operations Division, Forestry Section

Present	Request
Title: Landscape Designer	Title: Landscape Architect
Pay Range: 604 (\$40,105-\$47,194)	Pay Range: 628 (\$59,178-\$70,554)
Step: n/a	Source: Department
Recommendation: Title : Landscape Architect Pay Range: 606 (\$47,194-\$60,716) New Rate:	
Rationale: The duties of this position have evolved to the point where a degreed landscape architect with broader technical expertise than that typically possessed by a landscape designer is needed. Salary data and level of responsibility are more consistent with Pay Range 606 than 628.	
History of Position: This position was reclassified in August 1983 from an Engineering Drafting Technician II, Pay Range 602, to an Engineering Drafting Technician IV, Pay Range 604. The position's title was changed to Landscape Designer in August 2002 but the pay range did not change.	

Action Required:

In the Salary Ordinance, under Pay Range 606, add the title "Landscape Architect 1/" and add the following footnote: "1/ Employees holding the title of Landscape Architect shall be eligible for all steps of Pay Range 606."

In the Positions Ordinance, under Department of Public Works-Operations Division, Forestry Section, Administration, delete one position of Landscape Designer and add one position of Landscape Architect.

Background:

The department's request to conduct this study was received in July 2004 but was delayed pending a revised job description that was received November 19, 2004. Meetings were held with Mr. Robert McFadyen, Forestry Services Manager, in December 2004 and January 2005.

Duties, Responsibilities and Requirements:

The basic function of this position is to design, review and update landscape plans for city boulevards, municipal properties, totlots, greenspaces and concealed irrigation systems. Specific duties include the following:

- 35% Designs landscape plans, concealed irrigation systems and city streetscaping projects.
- 35% Coordinates Environmental Services responses to permits that affect street trees, boulevards, and greenspaces in the city right-of-way.
- 15% Reviews, drafts and coordinates contract documents for irrigation and streetscaping with consultants and city agencies.
- 10% Assists in the development of Forestry's Landscape and Tree Capital Budgets.
- 5% Acts as a liaison with other DPW Departments and tracks paving program.

According to the job description provided by the department, this position requires graduation from an accredited school of landscape architecture (Bachelor's degree), state licensure as a landscape architect and three years of landscape architecture experience. It also requires the ability to design landscape and irrigation plans using a Micro Station or CAD system, working knowledge of ornamental plant material and hardscaping used in landscape designs. The position also requires good customer relations and interpersonal skills, good oral, written and graphic presentation system skills and experience with computers and software, knowledge of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and ability to conduct field inspection of ongoing projects.

Analysis:

The scope of this position has significantly evolved over the years as greater emphasis continues to be placed on ecological and environmental concerns surrounding projects ranging from street paving to new urban development and construction. These issues include integrating structures with the natural environment in the least disruptive way, preserving and enhancing the city's tree canopy and green spaces, and creatively using landscape design elements to reduce storm water runoff and address other environmental issues.

The Forestry Section is now a key player in reviewing construction plans at an early stage to ensure that environmental and landscape considerations are addressed and built into the designs. On major projects this sometimes entails participating in design meetings as the landscaping expert with engineers, developers and contractors to discuss and make decisions regarding these issues. According to the department, landscape architect design expertise is needed to make and justify Forestry's recommendations as well as offer valid alternatives when necessary.

This position is currently classified as a Landscape Designer. While there is some overlap, there are significant differences between a landscape designer and a landscape architect. For example, to become a landscape architect requires completing a four-year degree and holding a professional license in the state where one is practicing. A landscape designer, on the other hand, typically requires an Associate degree and /or related experience and does not require licensure. A landscape designer is knowledgeable of plant materials and elements of design to create plans or drawings for residential or small commercial projects. Landscape architects, on the other hand, are often engaged in large public and commercial projects and developments requiring landscape planning, detailed landscape design and working with other professionals such as engineers, planners and consultants.

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Given the level of independence and expertise required and the duties this position will be performing, it does appear that the department's request that this position be filled by a professional landscape architect rather than a landscape designer is reasonable. Research conducted by the Department of Employee Relations and the Legislative Reference Bureau revealed that the position of landscape architect is fairly common in the public sector. A number of municipalities throughout the country were identified as employing landscape architects. Job descriptions and salary ranges were obtained from many of these cities and evaluated. In addition, salary information was obtained from the 2004 American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) Salary Survey and from the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.


The department has requested that this position be placed in Pay Range 628 (\$59,178-\$70,554). However, this salary range is significantly higher than the salary data obtained from the above sources and the level of responsibility of positions at this level (e.g., Architect III, Civil Engineer III) appears to be higher than the position under study. In contrast, Pay Range 606 is the next higher pay range above Landscape Designer and is more in line with the salaries that other public and private employers are paying.

The last two steps of this pay range are currently technical "M" steps for employees holding a Wisconsin license as a Professional Engineer, Registered Land Surveyor, or Registered Designer or who meet the college credit criteria. Since this position already requires a Bachelor's degree in landscape architecture and state licensure as a landscape architect we recommend that this position be eligible for all the steps of Pay Range 606. The footnote described in the "Action Required" section above would accomplish this purpose.

Recommendation:

We therefore recommend that Landscape Designer, Pay Range 604, be reclassified to Landscape Architect, Pay Range 606.

Prepared by:



Timothy J. Keeley, Human Resources Representative

Reviewed by:



Maria Montegudo, Employee Relations Director

Department of Employee Relations

Fiscal Note Spreadsheet

Date of Finance & Personnel Committee Meeting: February 17, 2005

Date of City Service Commission Meeting: February 15, 2005

NEW COST FOR 2005

No. Pos.	Dept	From	PR/SG	To	PR/SG	Present Annual	New Annual
1	Assessor's Office	New Position	N/A	Property Assessment Technician	530		
1	DPW-Operations	Landscape Designer	604	Landscape Architect	606	\$40,105	New Position \$47,194
2							

PROJECTED NEW COST FOR FULL YEAR

No. Pos.	Dept	From	PR/SG	To	PR/SG	Present Annual	New Annual
1	Assessor's Office	New Position	N/A	Property Assessment Technician	530		
1	DPW-Operations	Landscape Designer	604	Landscape Architect	606	\$40,105	New Position \$47,194
2							

Assumes an effective date of Pay Period 7, 2005 (March 13, 2005)
 Totals may not be to exact dollar due to rounding.

Timothy J. Keeley