

# COUNTY OF FAIRFAX, VA

## Environmental and Trades Compensation Study

April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019



# Contents

	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
1	PROJECT OVERVIEW	7
2	DATA GATHERING & INTERVIEW THEMES	9
3	INTERNAL REVIEW OF JOBS – KF METHODOLOGY	20
4	EXTERNAL COMPETITIVENESS ANALYSIS	26
5	RECOMMENDATIONS	39



# **Executive Summary**

# Executive Summary

**Korn Ferry partnered with Fairfax County to conduct a comprehensive compensation study for the Environmental and Trades Occupations. The study covered approximately 44 positions.**

The study objectives were to determine whether the County's current compensation policy is aligned with the markets from which it needs to recruit talent, and if it is adequate to attract, motivate and retain the right staff (in accordance with the County's mission and compensation strategy) in the most cost-effective manner. This was done by performing a market competitive analysis using all 44 positions benchmarked against similar jobs:

- At select peer organizations using custom survey market data or other surveys (7 jurisdictions);
- In other similar industry organizations;
- In the Washington, DC market (local jurisdictions surrounding the Fairfax County area).

The content of approximately the 44 benchmark positions were evaluated by Korn Ferry using job classification specs provided by the County.

From an internal pay perspective, reasonable relationships exist between job size and pay, with the exception of a few outliers, where pay is either higher or lower when comparing job size between peer levels (current internal pay practices).

Korn Ferry's top line findings and conclusions are summarized below.



# Executive Summary

## Market Competitiveness

The selected peer group represents the County's "business sector" and is comprised of similar organizations in the Public Sector in surrounding areas. These organizations are of similar style and job complexity as well as organizations with whom the County competes for talent. The current peer group does not demonstrate any obvious bias and is an appropriate position for the County in the future.

The County's target compensation, or pay philosophy, is currently set at the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile of the market (market represents 7 surrounding jurisdictions). Based on the Korn Ferry's experience, this is a reasonable starting point and represents some organizations in the County's recruitment strategy. When comparing the County to the local jurisdictions, the following competitive position has resulted across all the benchmark jobs:

**Overall, the County is at or above market** in most cases against the 50th percentile of the peer group. Findings summarized below:

- **4 positions** fall below market;
- **18 positions** fall in a competitive market range;
- **22 positions** fall above the competitive market range.

However, the analysis of the competitive market in which the County competes for talent reveals a significant need for improvement or expansion of peer group component, across all levels. The data above indicates that the County is at or above at most levels, but this is against a very narrow market and does not represent the reality for hiring or retention of talent. Essentially the County has positioned itself at the top of the comparator group. Also, in a large number of cases we found that while the structure midpoint looked extremely competitive, the actual salaries weren't close to the structure midpoint.

There is clearly a need, based on both the types of jobs and the challenges expressed by management, to expand the current pay philosophy. The consultants spent a considerable amount of time with senior management representatives across the various environmental and trade functions, and there is a clear need to set against a more "realistic" competitive peer group given the challenges in keeping, rewarding and attracting employees. The analysis demonstrates that if the County continues to follow the current classification and pay system, it will not be able to attract, motivate and retain the talent necessary to achieve its mission.



# Executive Summary

## Recommendations

The expansion of a broader market was discussed in-depth with senior management across the various functions in the Environmental and Trades occupations. The limited or “narrow” market comparator groups is causing significant compression and pay issues across these functions and management is having difficulty attracting and retaining the talent needed to achieve results and effectively carry out its mission. Korn Ferry recommends that the County adopt a pay policy that is still aligned with market median but expands to include some additional comparators (such as private sector and some not-for-profit organizations).

Additionally, utilizing or paying above market midpoint should be considered as many managers require the ability to pay at higher levels both internally (develop and motivate and reward high performers and high potentials) and externally (paying above midpoint will allow hiring at more competitive rates and consideration from potential candidates).

Also consider giving additional autonomy to functional leaders to hire closer to the midpoint and in limited number of cases even go above the stated midpoint. This will empower managers to hire individuals where the scenario may be time sensitive.

## Proposed Pay Plan

Korn Ferry recommends that the County continue to use a formal pay plan targeted at the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile of the “market” (market should be expanded to include a blend of Public Sector and some other organizations in either public or private sector, as needed). Korn Ferry’s study confirms that the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile is a reasonable and appropriate position for the County in order to achieve its mission and attract and retain the necessary talent, but at a much broader level.

Additional consideration for some compensation in terms of hiring bonuses, including student loan payments or one-time bonuses for some positions should be reviewed where there are high turnovers or extreme difficulty in attracting talent.

Some positions are working in hazardous environments and require hazard duty pay. Our report provides recommendations to review the working conditions for some positions and adopt a pay philosophy to compensate those workers under hazardous conditions.

The continued use of a formal pay plan will allow the County to manage the compensation of many different jobs within a compensation system designed to align job responsibilities with market competitive compensation.

# Project Overview



# Project Overview

Each year Fairfax County Government is tasked with taking an annual review of all occupational groups in order to review the current external salary market competitiveness for each occupation. In April of 2017, The County of Fairfax, Virginia (the ‘County’) partnered with Korn Ferry (‘KF’) to conduct a comprehensive compensation study for the Environmental and Trades Occupations. The goals set forth were:

- To determine the overall prevailing salaries for the Counties “Environmental and Trade” occupations.
- The analysis to be conducted and recommendations administered will take into consideration various situations, such as:
  - Pay compression between various level occupations.
  - Internal pay inequities amongst the “Environmental and Trade” occupations at different hierarchical levels.
  - Potential modifications to the County’s compensation and salary administration processes/procedures for applicable occupations.
- Overall, the expectations were to provide services on a variety of compensation programs, including but not limited to:
  - Pay range evaluation;
  - Broad banding or other alternative pay range options;
  - Classification;
  - Salary Surveys;
  - Market Pricing and Analysis;
  - Compensation Strategy;
  - Compensation Administration; and
  - Strategic Communication and Training



# Data Gathering & Interview Themes

# Data Gathering

**The County provided KF several documents below:**

- Organization charts;
- Job descriptions;
- Class specifications;
- Results from previous compensation studies;
- Turnover statistics by employee groups;
- List of target participants for the custom survey;
- Financial (budget) information; and
- Input from functional leaders by way of KF conducting executive interviews and focus groups with a number of employee groups within the County.



# Interview Themes Pertaining to Rewards

- Benefits are competitive at the County, although there is some speculation that the upcoming changes to the retirement benefit coupled with the low base salaries may not be enough to attract talent for the future.
  - Historically, the stability and benefits offered by the County could be enough to offset the lower pay competitiveness.
- There is not enough movement within a salary grade to retain top talent.
  - Budgets of 1-2%, when available, have perpetuated a lack of competitiveness when hiring or retaining talent.
- Some concern over pay competitiveness for work being performed during unfavorable or extreme conditions, expressed interest in defining, and perhaps implementing, a “hazard pay” option as a means of remaining competitive.
- There is a strong desire for a pay for performance, recognition or merit system programs to reward individuals.

*“Benefits are great, but you can’t eat the benefits or keep a roof over your head with them”*

*“Annual increases are not keeping up with cost of living”*

*“Our take home pay has decreased because benefit costs have risen more than the annual increase budgeted”*

# Interview Themes Pertaining to Role Structure

- In general - it appears that the County has breadth and added complexity to their roles than other Counties hence, requiring most individuals to be cross-trained across roles in each agency.
- The job holder is expected to have broad knowledge vs. other counties that may have a specialty specific role. For e.g., Master Combination Inspector, Technicians at DVS, FCPA Maintenance roles, Engineers at LDS, HVAC at FCPA and FMD, Environment and Services Supervisor role at DPWES.
- There are current job matches that do not reflect the actual job responsibilities at the County. For e.g., Combination Inspector, Branch Chief role, Heavy Equipment Operators at DPWES (difficult to find who have both Class A (tractor trailers as well as Commercial vehicles), Parts shop/materials management at DVS (these are not warehouse jobs- they need the technical and automotive/fire/rescue/bus knowledge), Code Specialist III at LDS.
- There is a concern to retain key talent and to transfer institutional knowledge as the most tenured individuals approach retirement.
  - There is a question if the jobs need to be restructured to replace the large breadth of knowledge currently in place.

*“Burnout and low staff morale  
is a constant challenge”*



# Interview Themes Pertaining to Job Levels

- We consistently heard that there are concerns about compression within grades and pay.
- The County promotion policy often does not match the market rate of pay for external hires.
  - Also evident is the fact that internal promotions and long tenured individuals are often paid less than newly hired or less experienced hires.
- Some agencies do not utilize the entry level job classification because they are looking for more experienced individuals to hit the ground running on day 1, and also because generally the pay is not competitive at the entry level.
- Additionally, there is compression felt between the supervisor levels and the individual contributors.
- It is difficult to retain journey level skills or higher levels because the County trains them effectively and then they leave for a higher paying role which in most cases might also entail lesser responsibilities.
- It appears that the journey roles have comparable responsibilities across classifications. They are typically able to work independently using senior or journey level technical skills.

*"Fairfax County is like a stepping stone for a career because people obtain the skills and then leave to go to other Counties or DC"*

*"Often there is only a one grade difference however the job duties for a supervisor feel greater than a one grade difference"*



# Interview Themes from FMD

- External hires come from private sector i.e.:
  - a. Recruitment:
    - Hire from within, apprenticeship programs;
    - Hard to hire from the outside; and
    - Show the maximum on the job posting but cannot offer above the mid - similar to what we heard in other groups.
  - b. Retention:
    - Once you decide to work for the county, no issue with turnover;
    - Not pulling from other counties;
    - Pull from private sector only;
    - Settling for lowest skill set so quality is lacking; and
    - Part of the problem is they only have residential experience because of salary.
- Once working for the County, focus on promoting from within and apprenticeship programs for the Electricians and HVAC positions.
- Difficult to find the commercial skills needed to operate the equipment due to pay.



# Interview Themes from LDS

- Compete for talent across other VA or MD Counties, private developer firms and other agencies at the County.
- At the County, the size and volume of projects are larger than other counties. Also, the County has more cross functional responsibilities across residential, commercial, storm water, construction and geo tech. Competing Counties may have more specialization within the roles, for example.
- The Code Specialist roles which are often used to promote the technical background and qualifications for individuals who do not have an Engineering Degree.
- Difficult to find candidates at the advance expert level given the breadth of responsibility and balance of technical knowledge plus leadership skills.
- It is critical to review the matches for the Chief Building Inspections and Combination Inspector role to accurately reflect the job responsibilities.



# Interview Themes from FCPA

- Golf roles are difficult to find competitive data. There is a large variance in how the levels of work are used because of the complexity of facilities and often roles are titled to obtain a higher salary grade to compete.
- Roles are broader compared to other counties and private sector because of project size and lifecycle project management skills.
- Tree trimmers are a rare and unique skill set that are difficult to retain. The Parks Authority has to use external contractors which are much more costly to keep up with the demand and technical skills required.
- Merit staff are guaranteed 40 hours which creates some concerns with staffing levels and flexibility of job responsibilities across the seasons. There are several seasonal roles, including Ecologist I and II that are difficult to find each year and often leave for a job that provides benefits outside the County.
- Benchmarked some pay to the federal government GS scale - noted from interview with Ecologists.



# Interview Themes from DPWES

- There appeared to be some concerns over the big difference in grades (17 vs 19) for supervisor roles in Wastewater Collection Division, Maintenance and Stormwater Management and Solid Waste Management; these should be reviewed for job classification and pay parity. The group stated that the jobs are very similar in terms of complexity and accountabilities, but are classified differently.
- Consider implementing safety bonuses and recognition/pay for performance programs.
- High degree of innovation, fabrication and internal technical skills used – helps to limit the use of outside contractors.
- Difficulty recruiting for leadership (senior and seasoned individuals) roles because of the institutional knowledge and external relationships required to work in the County (learning curve is seen as long given the complexities within the county).
- Many roles must be knowledgeable about the regulations and MS4 program with DEQ, which brings more complexity to certain roles.
- Industrial Electricians, Instrumentation Technicians and Plant Mechanics work together frequently and their job matches should be reviewed to reflect the size and complexity that the roles require. These roles require individuals to be highly technical and apply critical thinking skills to maintain, repair and ensure effectiveness of the equipment.
- Challenge finding and/or training staff for supervisory experience from a very technical skillset of staff.
- Right-of-Way job levels were once aligned with engineering and project management. There is a concern that they are paid similarly in the market but that is not reflected at the County (review benchmarking).



# Interview Themes from DVS

- Parts room roles should not be compared to warehouse or materials management role because of the specific technical and automotive skills needed to find parts.
- High use of technology to diagnose and routinely use laptops and programming skills to fix vehicles and maintain equipment.
- Recruitment is difficult because not a lot of youth are going into the automotive field. It is not monetarily rewarding.
- Quite a few County employees have second full time jobs to make up for lack of pay at the County.
- Difficult to fill the night shift.
- Considered essential personnel - noted in interview with Vehicle and Equipment roles. Work as essential personnel even when schools close.
- Need to pay more competitively to attract the quality of talent needed to work across police, fire, school, waste management and emergency vehicles.
- Perception from the group that pay is not competitive with the private sector; roles that come from dealerships often receive incentive pay and higher salaries (although most understand the trade-off and balance working for the County).



# Summary of Observations and Action Items from Interviews

- **Rewards:**
  - **Hazard Duty Pay:** The County should consider establishing a formal hazard duty pay policy for positions that encounter hazardous conditions and/or stressful work conditions. However, criteria should be established when defining and setting hazard duty pay, including considering work duty that causes extreme physical discomfort and distress which is not adequately alleviated by protective devices and is deemed to impose a physical hardship (market practice later in this report expands on this topic). Specific positions that the County should review for additional information regarding the hazardous working conditions include:
    - DVS :
      - Vehicle Equipment Technicians – work with hazardous materials
      - Automotive Body Repairer – environmental workplace hazards
    - DPWES:
      - Plant Mechanic: Level 2 - Works in confined spaces with hazardous chemicals
      - Environmental techs - household hazardous waste exposure
  - **Internal Equity:** review current incumbent pay vs. new hires to ensure fairness and equity as perception that new hires are being paid substantially more. Criteria such as tenure and performance should be considered when moving individuals within their respective grade (within-grade-progression).
- **Job Classification:**
  - **Positions to Review:** Various positions need review in terms of current job accountabilities documented vs. actual work being performed. This should be done under a formal re-classification review, and should include the following positions:
    - Combination Inspector Branch Chief, Heavy Equipment Operators, Parts shop/materials management, Code Specialist III, Industrial Electricians, Industrial Technicians, Plant Mechanics, Right-of-Way Agents and Tree Trimmers (Arborists).



# **Internal Review of Benchmark Jobs - KF Methodology**

# Internal Review of Jobs

- KF spent a considerable amount of time ensuring that the **44** benchmark roles were clear to us in terms of complexity of work, decision making, scope, accountabilities and impact. All of this information was gained through formal documentation and validated by individual interviews with senior stakeholders and focus groups with employees.
- Although not in the scope of our project, we found it useful for our own purposes and to be able to review positions across the various data sources, to utilize our job evaluation methodology to assess the hierarchy of positions in the Environmental and Trades occupations. The list of benchmarks are listed below. This analysis, however, was limited as an internal validation process as part of the consultants due diligence and methodology and the County is not expected to utilize or adopt the job evaluation methodology going forward. Our methodology is outlined in *Appendix A*.

Job No.	Fairfax County Benchmark Job	Job No.	Fairfax County Benchmark Job	Job No.	Fairfax County Benchmark Job
1	AIRCRAFT & POWERPLANT TECH II	17	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SPEC II	33	PAINTER I
2	ARBORIST	18	ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGIST II	34	PEST CONTROLLER I
3	ASSISTANT VEHICLE & EQUIPMENT SUPERINTENDENT	19	FACILITIES MANAGER	35	PLANT OPERATOR II
4	AUTOMOTIVE BODY REPAIRER II	20	FACILITY ATTENDANT II	36	PLUMBER I
5	CARPENTER II	21	FIRE INSPECTOR II	37	PRINT SHOP OPERATOR II
6	CHIEF BUILDING ENGINEER	22	GENERAL BLDG MAINT WORKER II	38	RIGHT-OF-WAY AGENT
7	CHIEF OF SURVEY PARTIES	23	GOLF COURSE SUPT. II	39	TRADES SUPERVISOR
8	CODE COMP INVESTIGATOR II	24	HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR	40	TREE TRIMMER II
9	CODE SPECIALIST II	25	HVAC I	41	URBAN FORESTER II
10	COMBINATION INSPECTOR	26	INSTRUMENTATION TECHNICIAN III	42	UTILITIES ANALYST
11	CUSTODIAN II	27	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT II	43	VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT TECHNICIAN II
12	ECOLOGIST II	28	LOCKSMITH II	44	WELDER I
13	ELECTRICIAN II	29	MAINTENANCE TRADE HELPER II		
14	ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT TECH II	30	MAINTENANCE WORKER		
15	ENGINEER III	31	MASON		
16	ENGINEER IV	32	MATERIAL MGMT SPECIALIST II		



# Internal Review of Jobs – Job Classification

Our review of Fairfax County jobs and job classifications revealed some opportunities for additional review by the County:

- **Tree Trimmer vs. Arborist vs. Urban Forester:** As we understand, the current benchmark position (#40) Tree Trimmer II functions are more closely matched to an Arborist (or desired to be).
- According to the National Arborist Association, the difference between an Arborist and Tree Trimmer are as follows:
  - Arborists are really tree doctors, diagnosing and treating tree diseases, nutrient deficiencies and structural problems. Additionally, there is a fair amount of education that Arborists provide around how the anatomy of the tree works, how diseases affect trees and how a tree's immune system functions. Arborists also use mathematics to analyse a tree's structure or how structurally sound a tree is, which needs to be done correctly to ensure a tree's structure is safe. Typical credentials include a Bachelor's degree in Horticulture, Botany or Forestry and/or Certified Arborist.
  - Tree Trimmers, under the direction of a crew leader or even the Arborist, handle the actual physical removal of the damaged trees, plants and branches along with some tree maintenance work.
- Urban Foresters are correctly classified and match the professional definition of developing and managing complex or advanced urban forest management programs, projects and long term strategic initiatives relating to forest pest, forest conservation, urban forestry, landscape management and land development.
- *The current Fairfax County classification is more closely aligned to a Tree Trimmer, roles which are performing skilled and semi-skilled manual tree maintenance work. We would recommend adding a new classification more closely aligned to the definition above for the Arborist series.*
- *ERI, under the Bureau of Labor Statistics, does not collect data for Arborists. Other County governments, private sector organizations (tree care companies) and private consultants hire Arborists. Median pay ranges from \$28-\$35 per hour.*



# Internal Review of Jobs – Job Classification

Our review of Fairfax County jobs and job classifications revealed some opportunities for additional review by the County:

- **Golf Course Superintendent II:** The current Fairfax County job classification states that the level II supervises the maintenance of an 18 hole golf course and associated buildings and grounds that may include oversight of a driving range or other park facilities. Credentials include certification and strong knowledge in the profession, an Associate's degree and at least 2 years of experience (minimum requirements).
- When reviewing similar roles across the peer groups, the consultants validated that the comparable level of Superintendent was being used consistently when reviewing market data and met the criteria listed above. Positions with more complexity, bigger responsibility and oversight over multiple golf courses (36 holes) would be at a higher level of work and corresponding pay.
- Further validation using a secondary data source, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America Compensation Survey, validated our findings. Progression through a Superintendent rank is dependent on certification and degrees, similar to how the County has the career progression.
- The consultants would recommend an internal review of the current classifications of the Golf Course Superintendents at levels I, II and III to ensure they are meeting the needs of the County, if clear distinction of levels is appropriate given the complexity of work and accountabilities.



# Internal Review of Jobs – Job Classification

Our review of Fairfax County jobs and job classifications revealed some opportunities for additional review by the County:

- **HVAC I:** this position is a journey-level maintenance, repair, and installer of industrial and commercial HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning) equipment and systems; and performs related work as required under general direction. These positions generally require possession of a valid journeyman license from the state of Virginia within twelve months of date of appointment to the position.

As with many skilled labor workers, and according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, HVAC mechanic and installer jobs nationwide are expected to grow 14% through 2022. The County may find it challenging to retain this level of skilled worker and may look at faster career progression and/or adjust the career span for a HVAC technician which may be between 3-5 years. Alternatively, this level of skill may be better outsourced as technology changes so quickly and external vendor support and expertise may be more economical for the County.

- **Vehicle and Equipment Technician:** As a result of the most recent Fire study (uniform occupations) under our partnership with the County, it was determined that “Fire Mechanics” should be removed from the current “F” pay plan utilized for uniform occupations and transition to the “S” pay plan under the Vehicle and Equipment Technician series which is utilized for non-uniform occupations. The Fire Mechanics could easily transition to the Vehicle and Equipment Technician series with expanding the current class specifications (essential functions, education, experience and certifications) to ensure they accurately reflect the Fire Technician roles. This transition would allow more flexibility in career paths across all levels, especially within Fire where currently there is limited career growth. The following reclassification is recommended based on reviewing the job duties, accountabilities and credentials within the current class specifications:

- Fire Mechanic (F17): Vehicle and Equipment Technician III (S21)
- Fire Apparatus Assistant Supervisor (F19): Vehicle and Equipment Supervisor (S22)
- Fire Apparatus Supervisor (F21): Vehicle and Equipment – Assistant Superintendent (S25)



# Internal Review of Jobs – Recruiting & Retention

- Our interview process and review of Fairfax County jobs found that many departments are faced with challenges in recruiting and retention are summarized below:
- The various County departments shared information regarding challenges for certain jobs in both retention and recruiting (data from declined offers) in the environmental and trades functions (as outlined in our interview themes).
- Increasing competitive pay position and wages is just one avenue to explore while building a strategy for employee recruitment and retention. There are a variety of factors that will ultimately help you to attract and keep the best talent, including career development opportunities, training, leadership development and employee engagement and satisfaction. These issues should be reviewed in your organization across the various departments to understand the most effective means of remaining competitive in a tough recruitment market.
- The consultants have noted these challenges from a hiring and retention perspective and communicated to the HR project team. Upon agreement and acceptance of this pay study, special attention to these jobs should be reviewed by individual employee for internal equity and external market position (i.e., paying closer to midpoint if warranted).

# External Competitiveness Analysis

# External Competitiveness Analysis

External competitiveness examines the aggregate position of an employee's pay compared to certain percentile levels in the external market.

- To determine the Counties position relative to the market, KF conducted two sub-analysis using several sources of data.
  - Data is not the answer. Data is 'information' that is used to make decisions. Because of this, the more data (information) you have, the more equip you are to make a decision.
- The first, or **positioning**, sub-analysis examines the midpoint pay, in each benchmark job as a whole compared to several market sources.
  - The purpose of the positioning analysis is to determine the relative *position* of each 'job' against the various data sources so that we can determine the appropriate 'blend' of data going into the weighted analysis.
  - Some sources of data are aligned to certain jobs. The positioning analysis helps to reveal which data sources match which jobs; and the most effective way to apply 'weightings' to the data that will result in the most appropriate comparator.
- The second, or **weighted**, sub-analysis goes deeper and examines each individual employee's pay against midpoint/median of the market depending on the matches used with the applied weightings determined by the positioning analysis.
  - By looking at the market position at each individual employee level, you can begin to make critical compensation decisions on an individual basis using the Counties philosophy and strategy: to maintain a competitive level for compensation administration with at least the **external salary range mid-point average** of comparator organizations in the local Washington DC area.



# Survey Data Sources Analysis

- Using the approved leveling process and our understanding of each benchmark job, KF compared the County's median pay by position to the external market sources, using the following criteria.
  1. **Our initial focus was to conduct a custom survey as well along with the LGPA survey** to include institutions that have similarly-structured pay systems in relevant and local jurisdictions and where the County competes for talent. This included local, county and public sector institutions.
  2. **Secondly, we focused on comparable private sector (for-profit and non-profit) employers in the area.** Since the County focuses on well respected, recently published sources of market data, we referenced and compared (as appropriate) benchmark positions to the HRA-NCA's annual compensation survey (DC focused), Economic Research Institute's Salary Assessor survey, and KF's extensive database which includes private, public and not-for profit data. These data sources are used to supplement gaps from the custom survey effort. The KF database replaces the Mercer and Towers salary surveys as they are comparable. We are confident that our surveys are equal if not stronger sources.
  3. **Lastly, we utilized third party surveys** that we had access to for benchmarking to unique jobs. We reviewed the surveys carefully, ensured they were credible sources, and matched the County benchmarks based on job functions. The most relevant data source was the 2018 Engineering-East Salary Survey.
- Since surveys are conducted at different times, all data were aged to a common date of **August, 2018** using a 3% per annum to form a consistent baseline for benchmarking. Data sources for market data on annual increase included both Korn Ferry and World at Work.

**Note:** See job matches in Appendix B for ERI, HRA-NCA, Engineering Survey and LGPA surveys. The list of surveys and participants can be found in Appendix C.



# External Competitiveness

- Once the survey data sources (both custom survey and third-party surveys) are quality reviewed and finalized, the actual base salary for each individual incumbent is compared to the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile of the chosen market.
- The results are examined as follows:
  - First, positions to market can be seen as a percent above or below the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile
  - Second, the current position in range is displayed and can be used to compare to the market median.
- An examination of current position in range and recommendation to new range based on the market P50 and midpoint of salary range, should be considered.
- Reduction to a lower grade is not recommended, even though some position range midpoints are higher than market midpoint.
- When compared to the market on an aggregate, the Counties salaries are generally more competitive overall, but on a job/incumbent basis, they are vast differences between pay and market position.
- The Counties' salary practice is slightly "flatter" than the prevailing market compensation practices (i.e., as job size increases, pay does not increase at a comparable rate).



# Analysis Findings by Job

- The following tables illustrate each County benchmark against:
  - The midpoint of the market salary range.
- If appropriate matches did not exist against the custom survey or the LGPA survey, we utilized the median or average salary as reported in other third party surveys such as ERI, HRA-NCA and the Engineering survey.
- Each benchmark position is represented with an average rate of pay (averaged for benchmark positions that have multiple incumbents) as well as the current salary range midpoint.
- Recommendations for shifting to a higher grade is made if warranted (if the benchmark position is lower against the targeted market). This is based on the County's policy of "market-based" approach. We would recommend review and impact for internal equity before adjustments are made.
- Making the appropriate grade adjustments to benchmark positions, as recommended, will allow the County to be competitive against the peer group and ensure attraction and retention of talent.
- If needed, and if supporting data regarding turnover and retention statistics are high for certain positions, the County may wish to consider actual pay closer or above the midpoint as needed.



# Analysis Findings by Job

Job No.	Fairfax County Benchmark Job Title	Position Status (# of positions)	Fairfax County Average Base (Incumbent)	Survey Mkt Data Midpoint	Avg. Incumbent Base Variance to Survey Mkt	Current FFX Grade	Current FFX Structure Midpoint	Current FFX Structure Midpoint vs. Survey Midpoint	Positioning vs. Market	KF Recommended Grade Changes
1	AIRCRAFT & POWERPLANT TECH II	General Merit (1)	84,385	75,684	11%	S22	70,806	-6%	Below Market	Up 1 Grade
2	ARBORIST (new position)	n/a	n/a	70,408	n/a	n/a				S22
3	ASSISTANT VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT SUPERINT	General Merit (5)	91,773	80,913	13%	S25	81,733	1%	In Competitive Range	
4	AUTOMOTIVE BODY REPAIRER II	General Merit (4)	56,687	56,950	0%	S19	61,567	8%	Above Market	
5	CARPENTER II	General Merit (5)	67,566	55,526	22%	S18	58,764	6%	Above Market	
6	CHIEF BUILDING ENGINEER	General Merit (11)	76,463	71,178	7%	S24	77,936	9%	Above Market	
7	CHIEF OF SURVEY PARTIES	General Merit (1)	87,027	78,842	10%	S26	85,528	8%	Above Market	
8	CODE COMP INVESTIGATOR II	General Merit (17)	76,170	58,874	29%	S24	77,936	32%	Above Market	
9	CODE SPECIALIST II	General Merit (23)	79,769	84,186	-5%	S25	81,733	-3%	In Competitive Range	
10	COMBINATION INSPECTOR	General Merit (18)	65,652	64,022	3%	S21	67,653	6%	Above Market	
11	CUSTODIAN II	General Merit (4), Non-Merit (3)	37,554	43,057	-13%	S08	37,132	-14%	Below Market	Up 3 Grades
12	ECOLOGIST II	General Merit (6), Non-Merit (2)	71,308	84,081	-15%	S24	77,936	-7%	Below Market	Up 1 Grade
13	ELECTRICIAN II	General Merit (14)	64,117	60,080	7%	S20	64,486	7%	Above Market	
14	ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT TECH II	General Merit (8)	67,105	56,950	18%	S21	67,653	19%	Above Market	
15	ENGINEER III	General Merit (113), Non-Merit (10), Temporary(1)	87,728	89,305	-2%	S27	89,742	0%	In Competitive Range	
16	ENGINEER IV	General Merit (45), Non-Merit (1)	106,652	95,873	11%	S29	98,617	3%	In Competitive Range	
17	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SPEC II	General Merit (27)	66,106	61,543	7%	S23	74,196	21%	Above Market	
18	ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGIST II	General Merit (2)	60,327	65,937	-9%	S22	70,806	7%	Above Market	
19	FACILITIES MANAGER	General Merit (4)	100,972	95,933	5%	S28	94,068	-2%	In Competitive Range	
20	FACILITY ATTENDANT II	General Merit (9), Non-Merit (5), Temporary(26)	41,002	46,696	-12%	S14	48,939	5%	In Competitive Range	
21	FIRE INSPECTOR II	General Merit (23), Non-Merit (1)	56,325	63,304	-11%	S20	64,486	2%	In Competitive Range	
22	GENERAL BLDG MAINT WORKER II	General Merit (30)	58,455	50,336	16%	S18	58,764	17%	Above Market	



# Analysis Findings by Job

Job No.	Fairfax County Benchmark Job Title	Position Status (# of positions)	Fairfax County Average Base (Incumbent)	Survey Mkt Data Average Structure Midpoint	Avg. Incumbent Base Variance to Survey Mkt	Current FFX Grade	Current FFX Structure Midpoint	Current FFX Structure Midpoint vs. Survey Midpoint	Positioning vs. Market	KF Recommended Grade Changes
23	GOLF COURSE SUPT. II	General Merit(1)	85,964	83,379	3%	S22	70,806	-15%	Below Market	Up 3 Grades
24	HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR	General Merit(95), Non-Merit (2), Temporary(4)	56,286	47,476	19%	S17	56,196	18%	Above Market	
25	HVAC I	General Merit(13)	55,617	56,950	-2%	S19	61,567	8%	Above Market	
26	INSTRUMENTATION TECHNICIAN III	General Merit(7)	72,853	62,917	16%	S22	70,806	13%	Above Market	
27	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT II	General Merit(1)	89,853	65,000	38%	S24	77,936	20%	Above Market	
28	LOCKSMITH II	General Merit(4)	70,154	61,834	13%	S20	64,486	4%	In Competitive Range	
29	MAINTENANCE TRADE HELPER II	General Merit(4)	44,919	43,472	3%	S12	44,502	2%	In Competitive Range	
30	MAINTENANCE WORKER	General Merit(85), Non-Merit (31), Temporary(4)	36,723	39,034	-6%	S10	40,651	4%	In Competitive Range	
31	MASON	General Merit(3)	58,372	56,010	4%	S18	58,764	5%	In Competitive Range	
32	MATERIAL MGMT SPECIALIST II	General Merit(17)	49,069	47,489	3%	S15	51,283	8%	Above Market	
33	PAINTER I	General Merit(5)	53,997	51,318	5%	S16	53,614	4%	In Competitive Range	
34	PEST CONTROLLER I	General Merit(4)	52,380	40,852	28%	S17	58,196	38%	Above Market	
35	PLANT OPERATOR II	General Merit(14)	63,604	59,388	7%	S19	61,567	4%	In Competitive Range	
36	PLUMBER I	General Merit(3)	50,754	54,160	-6%	S18	58,764	9%	Above Market	
37	PRINT SHOP OPERATOR II	General Merit(5)	62,451	56,551	10%	S16	53,614	-5%	In Competitive Range	
38	RIGHT-OF-WAY AGENT	General Merit(8)	84,348	73,250	15%	S23	74,196	1%	In Competitive Range	
39	TRADES SUPERVISOR	General Merit(5)	77,335	71,178	9%	S22	70,806	-1%	In Competitive Range	
40	TREE TRIMMER II	General Merit(1)	52,386	43,691	20%	S17	56,196	29%	Above Market	
41	URBAN FORESTER II	General Merit(11)	78,641	72,643	8%	S24	77,936	7%	Above Market	
42	UTILITIES ANALYST	General Merit(1)	101,842	91,078	12%	S27	89,742	-1%	In Competitive Range	
43	VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT TECHNICIAN II	General Merit(102), Non-Merit(1)	61,620	56,950	8%	S20	64,486	13%	Above Market	
44	WELDER I	General Merit(2)	48,119	52,223	-8%	S17	56,196	8%	Above Market	
<b>GRAND TOTAL*</b>				4%			6%			

\* GRAND TOTAL reflects FFX's % above the Survey Market Median



# Market Incentive Pay

- The organizations who participated in the custom survey communicated that environmental and trade positions typically do not have a formal incentive plan, with a few exceptions where positions receive more than base pay.
- The most common type of bonus or variable pay plan in public sector governments are typically across the board “bonus”, with less than 1% of base salary; recruitment and retention bonuses for executive and director levels or “hot skill” jobs; and some spot awards or project focused bonuses that have direct impact on result or strategic initiatives.
- Formalized short and/or long term incentives plan in public sector are less than 10% in the organizations we cited and typically reserved at the executive level.
- The table on the following page indicates by job where incentive/bonus pay is prevalent in the market and typical percent of base salary paid.

# Market Incentive Pay by Job

Job No.	Fairfax County Benchmark Job	Incentive/Bonus Pay Plan	Percent of Base Salary (Target)
1	AIRCRAFT & POWERPLANT TECH II		
2	ARBORIST	x	2-3%
3	ASSISTANT VEHICLE & EQUIPMENT SUPERINTENDENT		
4	AUTOMOTIVE BODY REPAIRER II		
5	CARPENTER II	x	2%
6	CHIEF BUILDING ENGINEER	x	3-4%
7	CHIEF OF SURVEY PARTIES	x	3-5%
8	CODE COMP INVESTIGATOR II		
9	CODE SPECIALIST II		
10	COMBINATION INSPECTOR		
11	CUSTODIAN II		
12	ECOLOGIST II		
13	ELECTRICIAN II	x	1-2%
14	ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT TECH II		
15	ENGINEER III	x	1-2%
16	ENGINEER IV	x	1-2%
17	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SPEC II		
18	ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGIST II		
19	FACILITIES MANAGER	x	1%
20	FACILITY ATTENDANT II		
21	FIRE INSPECTOR II	x	1-2%
22	GENERAL BLDG MAINT WORKER II		

Job No.	Fairfax County Benchmark Job	Incentive/Bonus Pay Plan	Percent of Base Salary (Target)
23	GOLF COURSE SUPT. II	x	1-2%
24	HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR		
25	HVAC I		
26	INSTRUMENTATION TECHNICIAN III		
27	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT II		
28	LOCKSMITH II		
29	MAINTENANCE TRADE HELPER II		
30	MAINTENANCE WORKER		
31	MASON		
32	MATERIAL MGMT SPECIALIST II		
33	PAINTER I		
34	PEST CONTROLLER I		
35	PLANT OPERATOR II		
36	PLUMBER I		
37	PRINT SHOP OPERATOR II		
38	RIGHT-OF-WAY AGENT	x	1-2%
39	TRADES SUPERVISOR	x	2%
40	TREE TRIMMER II	x	1%
41	URBAN FORESTER II		
42	UTILITIES ANALYST		
43	VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT TECHNICIAN II	x	1-2%
44	WELDER I		



# Pay Differentials

- The table on the right outlines the benchmark positions and where pay differentials are most common amongst the comparators.

Job No.	Fairfax County Benchmark Job	Shift Differential Pay	Call-in Pay	Stand-by/On-call Pay
1	AIRCRAFT & POWERPLANT TECH II			
2	ARBORIST			
3	ASSISTANT VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT SUPERINT			
4	AUOMOTIVE BODY REPAIRER II			
5	CARPENTER II			
6	CHIEF BUILDING ENGINEER			
7	CHIEF OF SURVEY PARTIES			
8	CODE COMP INVESTIGATOR II			
9	CODE SPECIALIST II			
10	COMBINATION INSPECTOR			
11	CUSTODIAN II			
12	ECOLOGIST II			
13	ELECTRICIAN II	x	x	x
14	ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT TECH II			
15	ENGINEER III			
16	ENGINEER IV			
17	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SPEC II			
18	ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGIST II			
19	FACILITIES MANAGER			
20	FACILITY ATTENDANT II			
21	FIRE INSPECTOR II			
22	GENERAL BLDG MAINT WORKER II			
23	GOLF COURSE SUPT II			
24	HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR	x	x	x
25	HVAC I	x	x	x
26	INSTRUMENTATION TECHNICIAN III	x	x	x
27	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT II			
28	LOCKSMITH II			
29	MAINTENANCE TRADE HELPER II	x	x	x
30	MAINTENANCE WORKER	x	x	x
31	MASON			
32	MATERIAL MGMT SPECIALIST II			
33	PAINTER I			
34	PEST CONTROLLER I			
35	PLANT OPERATOR II	x	x	x
36	PLUMBER I	x	x	x
37	PRINT SHOP OPERATOR II			
38	RIGHT-OF-WAY AGENT			
39	TRADES SUPERVISOR	x	x	x
40	TREE TRIMMER II			
41	URBAN FORESTER II			
42	UTILITIES ANALYST			
43	VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT TECHNICIAN II	x	x	x
44	WELDER I	x	x	x

# Pay Differentials

Organization/Pay Practices	Fairfax County Government	Fairfax County Public Schools	Fairfax Water
Shift Differential Pay	For general employees, police, and sheriff, .0.9 evening shift and 1.30 night shift differential rates. For fire 24-hour shift, .73 differential rate.	\$.35/hr. evening shift differential pay; \$.45/hr. night shift differential pay	None.
Rotating Shift Pay	Employees who work a fixed or rotating shift of more than 12 hours are entitled to shift differential premium pay as long as the hours are a part of the regular schedule, rather than overtime.	None.	None.
Overtime Pay	All employees paid at time-and-a-half after working 40 hours in a workweek.	All employees paid at time-and-a-half after working 40 hours in a workweek (workweek includes paid leave and holiday and excludes call-in hours).	Incumbents used for survey eligible for overtime pay at time-and-a-half.
Call-in Pay	4.0 hours or the actual number of hours worked, whichever is greater using attendance/absence code O501 (Call Back Pay; 1.5 rate) OR 4.0 hours or the actual number of hours worked, whichever is greater using attendance/absence code O401 (Call Back Compensatory Time; 1.5 rate).	Employees performing essential work outside normal work hours receive pay at one-and-a-half without meeting the 40 hour threshold.	None.
Stand-by /On-call Pay	Current Policy: On-call time is defined as that period of time when an employee is required to remain available, outside his/her scheduled work hours to report to work within a reasonable time if called upon to do so.	None.	Industrial Electrician IIIs and Instrumentation Technician IIIs receive \$10/day M-F and \$20/day Sat, Sun, and Holidays.
Premium Pay	For retention, leaf collection workers receive \$700 pay if worker works entire season; Mechanics, Auto Body Specialist, Parts Specialists, Admin Assistants, and Supervisory Staff receive premium pay upon completion of certification; vehicle mechanics receive reimbursement for tool costs; Aircraft & Power Plant Technicians receive \$1200 year premium pay for specialized skill set.	None.	None
Comparison Jobs			



# Pay Differentials

Organization/Pay Practices	Fairfax County Government	Henrico County	Howard County
Shift Differential Pay	For general employees, police, and sheriff, 0.9 evening shift and 1.30 night shift differential rates. For fire 24-hour shift, .73 differential rate.	None.	5% evening shift differential pay; 7.5% night shift differential pay.
Rotating Shift Pay	Employees who work a fixed or rotating shift of more than 12 hours are entitled to shift differential premium pay as long as the hours are a part of the regular schedule, rather than overtime.	None.	5% evening shift differential pay; 7.5% night shift differential pay.
Overtime Pay	All employees paid at time-and-a-half after working 40 hours in a workweek.	Overtime for non-exempt employees only. Overtime is paid at time-and-a-half when employees' actual hours worked exceed 40 hours in the same 7-day workweek (workweek includes paid leave and holiday). Overtime is paid at the regular hourly rate for hours compensated over 40 hours in the same 7-day work week until the number of hours worked in that workweek exceed 40 hours.	All employees paid at time-and-a-half after working 40 hours in a workweek.
Call-in Pay	4.0 hours or the actual number of hours worked, whichever is greater using attendance/absence code 0501 (Call Back Pay; 1.5 rate) OR 4.0 hours or the actual number of hours worked, whichever is greater using attendance/absence code 0401 (Call Back Compensatory Time; 1.5 rate).	Call back pay is treated like overtime. Call back pay is paid when an employee is required to return to work for an unplanned reason and when the employee is not a designated on-call person.	Employees called in to work hours not contiguous to their regular shift paid minimum of 4 hours pay at time-and-a-half. Stand-by employees receive minimum call-in pay (in addition to standby-by pay) for the first call-in during any one stand-by period. Any additional work time during the same 24 hour period paid as overtime.
Stand-by /On-call Pay	Current Policy: On-call time is defined as that period of time when an employee is required to remain available, outside his/her scheduled work hours to report to work within a reasonable time if called upon to do so.	On-call is when an employee is designated as the on-call person for a 7-day consecutive period. Each on-call assignment (7-day period) is compensated at an amount equal to 4-hours of pay at the employee's regular hourly rate. In addition to the designated on-call pay, an employee is paid at the correct overtime hourly rate portal-to-portal for all hours worked on-call.	Stand-by employees granted 1 hour and 20 minutes of pay at time-and-a-half for the stand-by period between regular shifts or for each 24 hours in between regular shifts. This is in addition to any other pay being received for time worked. Union stand-by employees granted 2 hours of pay at straight time.
Premium Pay	For retention, leaf collection workers receive \$700 pay if worker works entire season; Mechanics, Auto Body Specialist, Parts Specialists, Admin Assistants, and Supervisory Staff receive premium pay upon completion of certification; vehicle mechanics receive reimbursement for tool costs; Aircraft & Power Plant Technicians receive \$1200 year premium pay for specialized skill set.	None	Motor Equipment Mechanics required to spend at least 50% of time welding will have \$1,000 added to base pay. Others doing welding 5% of their time and have certification will have \$500 added to their pay. CDL Licenses will receive an additional \$.30 per hour for all hours worked.
Comparison Jobs			Environmental and Trade jobs.



# Pay Differentials

Organization/Pay Practices	Fairfax County Government	Loudon Water	Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission
Shift Differential Pay	For general employees, police, and sheriff, .9 evening shift and 1.30 night shift differential rates. For fire 24-hour shift, .73 differential rate.	None.	\$1.50/hr. evening shift differential pay.
Rotating Shift Pay	Employees who work a fixed or rotating shift of more than 12 hours are entitled to shift differential premium pay as long as the hours are a part of the regular schedule, rather than overtime.	None.	None.
Overtime Pay	All employees paid at time-and-a-half after working 40 hours in a workweek.	Non-exempt employees paid at time-and-a-half when hours worked exceed 40 hours. On-call work begins when the employee leaves their house and ends when the employee returns back home. For purposes of this policy, an emergency work event is defined as unexpected and unscheduled work activity	Non-exempt employees paid at time-and-a-half.
Call-in Pay	4.0 hours or the actual number of hours worked, whichever is greater using attendance/absence code O501 (Call Back Pay; 1.5 rate) OR 4.0 hours or the actual number of hours worked, whichever is greater using attendance/absence code O401 (Call Back Compensatory Time; 1.5 rate).	None.	None.
Stand-by /On-call Pay	Current Policy: On-call time is defined as that period of time when an employee is required to remain available, outside his/her scheduled work hours to report to work within a reasonable time if called upon to do so.	Non-exempt employees are paid 4.5 hours of regular time for each week of on-call duty plus hours actually worked. For each hour spent working in response to an emergency or on an official company holiday, non-exempt employees are paid at time-and-a-half.	Positions with a rotating on-call schedule can receive 1 hr. at their base rate per day; max is 7 hrs./week. If employee is called back to work, employee receives min of 3 hrs. at base rate. If employee works over 3 hrs., employee is paid for all hrs. worked.
Premium Pay	For retention, leaf collection workers receive \$700 pay if worker works entire season; Mechanics, Auto Body Specialist, Parts Specialists, Admin Assistants, and Supervisory Staff receive premium pay upon completion of certification; vehicle mechanics receive reimbursement for tool costs; Aircraft & Power Plant Technicians receive \$1200 year premium pay for specialized skill set.	None	None
Comparison Jobs			



# Recommendations

## FY 2020 Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, 3 surveyed benchmark class specifications have been confirmed to be less than 95% of market and are, therefore, below the competitive market threshold:

- Aircraft & Power Plant Technician II
- Ecologist II
- Golf Course Superintendent II

In addition, 7 other class specifications are tied to these benchmarks and will also be adjusted accordingly.

The following table lists all impacted job classes.

	Class Code	Class Title	Pay Plan	Pay Grade	Grade Increase	New Grade
1	<b>20000725</b>	<b>AIRCRAFT &amp; POWERPLANT TECH II</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>23</b>
2	20000726	AIRCRAFT & POWERPLANT TECH I	S	21	1	22
3	<b>20000633</b>	<b>ECOLOGIST II</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>25</b>
4	20000632	ECOLOGIST I	S	21	1	22
5	20000634	ECOLOGIST III	S	27	1	28
6	20010025	ECOLOGIST IV	S	29	1	30
7	<b>20000481</b>	<b>GOLF COURSE SUPT. II</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>25</b>
8	20000482	GOLF COURSE SUPT. I	S	20	3	23
9	20000480	GOLF COURSE SUPT. III	S	24	3	27
10	20000486	TURFGRASS SPECIALIST	S	24	3	27

