

Compensation and Classification Study for the City of Cooper City, FL

FINAL REPORT



Evergreen Solutions, LLC

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

The leadership of the City of Cooper, FL (the “City”) in keeping with its commitment to attracting and retaining the employees necessary to provide high quality services determined that its current compensation and classification systems and structure needed to be updated to better reflect best practices. Evergreen Solutions, LLC (“Evergreen”) was selected by the City during September of 2022 as its partner to in order to accomplish this goal. This engagement sought to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the City’s current systems, conduct a job and pay grade analysis to study internal equity, collect peer salary and benefits data to study external equity, and adjust the current compensation and classification systems to better reflect the market. This study and the analysis contained within provides City leadership with valuable information related to their employee demographics, opinions, and market data, as well as internal and external equity. Throughout the study, City staff was engaged in the process and helped develop recommendations outlined later in this report.

Internal equity relates to the fairness of an organization’s compensation practices among its current employees. Specifically, by reviewing the skills, responsibilities, and duties of each position, it can be determined whether similar positions are being compensated in an equitable manner within the organization. External equity relates to the differences between how an organization’s classifications are valued and the compensation available in the marketplace for the same skills, responsibilities, and duties. This component of the study aims to address how the City is positioned in the market relative to other local area government organizations with similar positions and to develop recommendations that allow the City to compete in the market with a compensation plan that allows for recruitment and retention of quality employees.

1.1 STUDY METHODOLOGY

Evergreen Solutions combines qualitative and quantitative data analysis to produce recommendations that maximize the fairness and competitiveness of an organization’s compensation structure and practices. It is important to note that the data utilized in the study represents a snapshot in time. As market conditions can change rapidly, it is important for the City to conduct regular market surveys to ensure their external market position does not decay. A full compensation and classification review is recommended approximately every three to five years. Some examples of project activities included:

- Conducting a project kick-off meeting
- Presenting orientation sessions to employees
- Facilitating focus group sessions with employees
- Conducting an external market salary survey



- Conducting an external market benefits survey
- Developing recommendations for compensation management
- Revising classification descriptions based on employee Job Assessment Tool survey (JAT) and Department Director feedback
- Developing recommendations for compensation and classification changes
- Creating draft and final reports
- Conducting training sessions with human resources staff in the methodology used to systematically assess job classifications.

Kickoff Meeting

The kickoff meeting provided an opportunity to discuss the history of the City, finalize the work plan, and begin the data collection process. Data collection included the gathering of relevant background material including: existing pay plans, organization charts, policies, procedures, training materials, classification specifications, and other pertinent material. Evergreen Project Manager also participated in a Commissioner meeting remotely to hear areas of focus and answer questions from the Commission prior to beginning the study.

Employee Outreach

Through the orientation sessions, Evergreen consultants briefed employees on the purpose and major processes of the study. This process addressed employee questions in an effort to resolve misconceptions about the study and related tasks and explained the importance of employee participation in the JAT process.

In addition, employees participated in focus group sessions designed to gather input from their varied perspectives as to the strengths and weaknesses of the current system. Feedback received from employees in this context was helpful in highlighting aspects of the organization which needed particular attention and consideration. This information provided some basic perceptual background, as well as a starting point for the research process.

Job Assessment Tool® (JAT) Classification Analysis

Employees were asked to complete individual JAT surveys, where they shared information pertaining to their essential work functions in their own words. These JATs were analyzed and compared to the current classification descriptions, and classifications were individually scored based on employee responses to five compensable factor questions. Each of the compensable factors—Leadership, Working Conditions, Complexity, Decision Making, and Relationships—were given weighted values based on employee responses, resulting in a point factor score for each classification. The rank order of classes by JAT scores was used to develop a rank order of classes within the proposed compensation structure. Combined with market data, this information formed the foundation of the combined recommendations. The nature of each compensable factor is described below:

- Leadership –relates to the employee’s individual leadership role, be it as a direct report of others who have leadership responsibilities, or as an executive who has leadership over entire departments or the City as a whole.



- Working Conditions – deals with the employee’s physical working conditions and the employee’s impact on those conditions, as well as the working conditions impact or potential impact on the employee.
- Complexity – describes the nature of work performed and includes options ranging from entry-level manual or clerical tasks up to advanced scientific, legal, or executive management duties.
- Decision Making – deals with the individual decision-making responsibility of the employees. Are decisions made on behalf of the employee or is the employee making autonomous decisions that impact the individual, other employees, or even the entire organization?
- Relationships –deals with organizational structure and the nature of the employee’s working relationships. Responses range from employees who work primarily alone, those who work as members of a team, those who oversee teams, and those who oversee the organization as a whole.

Salary Survey

The external market for this study was defined as approved identified local government organizations with similar positions as well as similar characteristics, demographics, and service offerings. Specific benchmark positions in the City were surveyed, although not all positions had matching positions at the peer organizations. The data were then analyzed comparing City classifications to the jobs performing the same duties at peer organizations to gain a fuller understanding of their market position.

Benefit Survey

The external market for the benefits study utilized the same approved target market peers from the market survey to compare key benefits offerings. Generally recognized benefits service offerings were surveyed and analyzed comparing City benefits with those of target peer organizations to gain a fuller understanding of their market position for benefits.

Recommendations

Evergreen developed recommendations for the City to consider in order to help maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of its current compensation and classification structure. Evergreen provided the City with several recommendations and costs for Commissioner consideration. Plans ranged from minor tweaks to the current compensation and classification system to more comprehensive changes to the classification and compensation overall structure. These plans were designed to fix the issues identified in this report, while continuing to build on the strengths the City currently exhibits.



1.2 REPORT ORGANIZATION

This report includes the following additional chapters:

- Chapter 2 – Summary of Employee Outreach
- Chapter 3 – Assessment of Current Conditions
- Chapter 4 – Market Summary
- Chapter 5 – Benefits Summary
- Chapter 6 – Recommendations

Chapter 2 – Summary of Outreach

Outreach was conducted by an Evergreen consultant over the course of one day. The consultant met with City employees and explained the process of the study and fielded questions that employees had about the study. Focus groups were conducted to solicit information from employees that gave Evergreen solid information to begin researching. Employees provided Evergreen their opinions on classifications that were outdated, behind market, or had trouble retaining employees.

Information was also provided on the employees' opinions of the biggest competitors to the City. Finally, employees provided information on all the positive aspects of employment with the City. Evergreen used employee opinions as a starting point for some data collection, but everything that was used in the course of this study was independently verified by Evergreen. A full summary of the outreach can be found in **Chapter 2** of this report.

Chapter 3 - Assessment of Current Conditions

An assessment of current conditions was conducted to help Evergreen better understand the current standing of the City pay plan, demographics, and compensation structures. This assessment should be considered a snapshot in time and is reflective of the conditions present within the City upon the commencement of this study. This assessment was created using the data received from the City. By leveraging this information, Evergreen was able to gain a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the current compensation system. A full summary of the Assessment of Current Conditions can be found in **Chapter 3** of this report.

Chapter 4 - Market Summary

A salary survey was designed by Evergreen and approved by the City's human resources department. The external market was defined by Evergreen and approved by the City's human resources department. After the results were received, the data were analyzed to compare the City to the overall results. Combined with the JAT and Assessment of Current Conditions, the market survey gave Evergreen the foundational information needed to better understand the City's position relative to its labor market. A full summary of the market results can be found in **Chapter 4** of this report.



Chapter 5 – Benefits Summary

A benefits survey was designed by Evergreen to garner information from targeted peers regarding their benefit policies. Information was collected on insurance coverage, leave policies, retirement plans, and other fringe benefits. A full report can be found in **Chapter 5** of this report.

Chapter 6 – Recommendations

During the recommendations phase, Evergreen provided several different solution options based on their current relationship to market and the internal equity analysis. Solutions were provided that only require minor tweaks to the current compensation and classification systems, as well as some solutions that would require wholesale changes to City's current structure. Evergreen has provided the City with recommendations that can both leverage the current compensation structure and also help expand its ability to recruit and retain talent in the most competitive classifications. A full explanation of the recommendations can be found in **Chapter 6** of this report.



Chapter 2 – Summary of Employee Outreach

On October 20, 2022, Evergreen consultants conducted 2 orientation sessions and 4 focus groups for the City of Cooper City. Orientation sessions were conducted in order to inform employees about the purpose of the study and provide an overall explanation of the study process while also giving employees information about the different ways they would be asked to participate in the study. Focus groups were designed to solicit open feedback from employees concerning a number of topics related to compensation, classification and benefits both in their respective departments and the city as a whole. Overall, the goal of these groups was to gauge the general employee sentiment towards the current compensation and classification structures of the city, while also gathering specific employee concerns. All sessions had excellent participation and lively discussions.

The observations in this chapter are a generalized summary of opinions, general themes, and trends expressed by employees who either participated in a focus group, interview or provided direct feedback to Evergreen. Information that may identify the commenter has been removed. It is important to note the views shared in this summary are perceptual in nature and may not necessarily reflect actual conditions in the city.

Comments are separated by the following four categories below:

- 2.1 General Feedback
- 2.2 Compensation & Classification
- 2.3 Market Peers
- 2.4 Summary

2.1 GENERAL FEEDBACK

The primary focus of this study is to address the Cooper City compensation and classification structures. However, it is important to understand how employees currently view employment at large within the City, and as a result, general feedback was sourced from employees on what brought them to work for the City and what were the primary factors that led to their continued employment. Employees were also asked about the benefits offerings, classifications with high turnover, who are some key competitors in the marketplace for talent and what they see as the key issues the study should address. The comments described in this section reflect the factors that incentivize prospective applicants to pursue employment with the City, and also reflect the reasons employees have decided to continue working for the City. These elements are important to highlight. Compensation, while an important factor in employee engagement, is often not the sole determination for where employees wish to work. In fact, employees in each focus group referenced the importance of non-compensation related factors when considering continued employment. The responses given ranged from



positive attributes like location, job stability and pension plan. Additional comments expressed by employees include:

- **Benefits** – Employees expressed that the benefits package, while increasing in cost from years past, was a recognizable positive differentiator.
- **Culture** – Several employees cited a toxic work environment brought on by too much direct involvement from Commissioners and this was having a negative impact on morale and leading to higher turnover within the organization in the past few years.
- **Community** – Several employees shared their passion for serving the citizens of Cooper City and how rewarding serving the community can be.

Overall, personnel revealed that the City has historically been a wonderful to work with a number of distinct advantages in place for employees who desire the stability and improved work-life balance that comes with serving a smaller, family-first community. A common theme from staff was the growing concern that the Commissioners were too involved with day to day operations leading to a lack of trust and increased turnover for the City.

2.2 COMPENSATION AND CLASSIFICATION

As the main focus of this study, feedback on compensation and classification was solicited from employees. Employees were asked to identify any concerns, challenges, or limitations observed with how the city currently compensates and classifies its positions as well as non-compensation related factors contributing to overall employee satisfaction and engagement. It is important to note that the perceptions of employees listed below do not necessarily reflect or align with the data collected in the market survey, found in **Chapter 4**. The market survey data is qualitative while the feedback received through the in-person outreach sessions is more quantitative.

Specific feedback shared by employees related to compensation practices included the following:

- **External Equity** – Feedback on the competitiveness of pay in the City was unified with most employees sharing that they anticipate this study will reveal pay is lower than in neighboring municipalities. Many employees mentioned the lower pay and consistent turnover, especially in leadership positions was contributing to Cooper Cities difficulty recruiting and retaining talent. Several employees spoke of how the City historically would get more qualified applicants than was necessary and there was competition to gain employment at any level. Now, employees cited that when a job opening is posted they rarely get sufficient response and the often get zero qualified applicants. The general consensus was this was due to two main contributing factors. The first is that compensation was not competitive and the second was the City of gaining a reputation as a toxic workplace. The turnover in positions of leadership was highlighted during every outreach session. Specifically, the City Manager and Directors of Finance and Public Works classifications was referenced as positions that have high turnover with multiple incumbents in recent years. Several employees mentioned that the longest



tenured Director with the City was less than 3 years and there had been five City Managers in the past four years all of which was creating an organizational climate of continued uncertainty and change.

Additional positions that perceived their pay as below market mentioned during the focus group sessions include:

- Public Works Director (3 in last 2 years)
- Numerous openings for plant operator C license
- Utilities Field Maintenance workers
- Plant Technicians
- Purchasing Agent/Assistant or Procurement
- Arborist
- Park Rangers
- Mechanic
- Park attendants/Lifeguard
- Finance Department

The supervisor focus groups expressed the same concerns with current pay and organizational climate when compared to market peers.

- **Internal Equity** – There was a belief among employees that new hires were being hired at rates above those of tenured employees and that created wage compression. Employees in each focus group mentioned that a key issue was the City Commission's continued involvement in day to day operations and this was negatively impacting morale citywide. Another internal equity issue mentioned was that many employees felt that the job title did not accurately reflect the work being performed and that classification changes were necessary. Comments from employees included:
 - *“There has been a mass exodus in top management talent.”*
 - *“Employees feel like a target is on our back”.*
 - *“40 people have left the City in the last two years.”*
- **Turnover** – Several reasons for the perceived high turnover were mentioned by employees during focus group sessions. Director level positions were mentioned as positions employees felt had an extremely high turnover ratio. Commissioner involvement and public criticism of City employees in public meetings by Commissioner's was referenced in each session as a major contributing factor as to why tenured employees were seeking employment elsewhere. At the time the outreach was conducted, it was observed all current Directors had less than three years of employment with the City in their current role. This lack of institutional knowledge for an established municipality's leadership team is unique especially when considering the turnover is not related to retirement but instead is a result of voluntary terminations. A few employees referred to the city as the “training ground” for neighboring cities. Many cited that employees in the Utilities Department specifically would start at Cooper City, receive valuable training and, once the requisite certifications were achieved, would then leave for another municipality or private company for additional compensation.



- **Staffing Levels/Vacancies** – Employees mentioned several vacant positions they did not believe would be filled due to the lack of qualified applicants. Insufficient staffing levels were also mentioned by numerous employees saying that service levels in the City had decreased as they are required to do more with less. Employees cited that turnover and extended vacancies required them to do essential job functions inconsistent with their core responsibilities for longer periods of time but without additional compensation or promotion. Several mentioned they had served in an interim capacity numerous times or for more than 6 months without additional compensation or promotion. *“If you are acting director, only get up to 10% increase while serving in that interim role.”*
- **Benefits (perceived strengths)** – Most employees spoke positively about their benefit offerings, specifically health insurance and pension, as part of the reason for initially seeking employment and remaining with the city.
- **Benefits (perceived weakness’s)** – Employees expressed concern over the increasing costs associated with family health care coverage. The city’s previous policy of funding health insurance benefits for employees who do not require family coverage was specifically identified as a significant benefit. The general feedback was that benefits are good but costs passed onto employees continue to increase and far outpacing any annual salary increases.

2.3 MARKET PEERS

Focus group participants were asked to name municipalities they considered to be both local and regional market peers, who they believe have similar characteristics to Cooper City. Employees mentioned it was generally recognized that market research should be complex and varied because the city has cities and counties of various sizes competing for talent with nearby municipalities. Respondents shared numerous public-sector municipalities and private competitors as well. Responses are listed below and were considered when developing the list of peers for the compensation and classification survey. Participants named the following municipalities with some frequency as the city’s biggest competitors in terms of employee compensation and classification:

- Safety Harbor Sunrise
- Town of Davie
- Lauderdale Lakes
- Lauderdale by the Sea
- Lauder Hills
- Miramar
- West Palm
- Coconut Creek
- Coral Springs
- Broward County
- Parkland
- Ft. Pierce
- Ft. Lauderdale



- Dania Beach
- Deerfield Beach
- Plantation
- Tamarac
- Hollywood
- Oakland Park
- Lighthouse Point

2.4 SUMMARY

The feedback received by Evergreen Solutions provided a solid foundation for the development of recommendations for the City of Cooper City. The willingness of City employees to contribute to this dialogue in an honest and transparent manner was evident in the number of employees that took time to attend and share feedback with respect to potential compensation and classification strengths/weaknesses across the organization. These comments were verified and taken into consideration when identifying challenges and formulating recommendations for the City. The consensus was that Cooper City was once a preferred public sector employer with service oriented long tenured employees and a reputation for stability, fair compensation and excellent service. Employees mentioned that the City has changed significantly in the past few years and the work environment is making it difficult to recruit and retain employees. One memorable quote from an employee seemed to sum up the frustration of many stating, *“Cooper City is a family but it’s a very dysfunctional family.”*

Employees, especially tenured staff, spoke with great fondness about the reputation the City had as the employer of choice in the public sector for decades. Many stated that in the past they felt valued by City leadership but that now they feel as though they are under attack. Several attendees stated that if employees could receive clear direction of what was expected of them in their role and be given the resources to do it, they feel as though things could improve rapidly.

As a whole, the employees of the City of Cooper City enjoy serving city residents, feel a sense of pride in their work, love serving their community, commonly refer to themselves as part of a family, and strive to make distinct contributions to their organization and their community. The Evergreen Team used the information gathered from employees throughout the remainder of this study in order to arrive at appropriate recommendations for the City.



Chapter 3 – Assessment of Current Conditions

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a statistical analysis of the Compensation and Classification system in place at the City at the start of this study. The assessment is divided into the following sections:

- 3.1 Analysis of the Pay Plan
- 3.2 Grade Placement Analysis
- 3.3 Quartile Analysis
- 3.4 Summary

The analysis represented in this chapter represents a snapshot in time – this chapter was built off of employee information collected in September of 2022. Every organization changes continuously, so this chapter is not meant to be a definitive statement on continuing compensation practices at the City. Rather, this AOCC is meant to represent the conditions that were in place when this study began. The data contained within provide the baseline for analyses through the course of this study but are not sufficient cause for recommendations in isolation. By reviewing employee data, Evergreen gained a better understanding of the structure and methods in place and identified issues for both further review and potential revision.

3.1 ANALYSIS OF THE PAY PLAN

The purpose of analyzing the pay plan used within the City is to help gain an overview of the compensation philosophy as it existed when the study began. The City had a system in place that categorized classifications by level and type of work. This system used numeric pay grades to represent classifications of varying level and responsibility. **Exhibit 3A** displays the City’s pay plan summarized for ease of comparison. The exhibit provides the name; each pay grade on the plan; the value of each pay grade at minimum, midpoint, and maximum; the range spread for each pay grade – which is a measure of the distance between the minimum and maximum of the grade; the midpoint progression between grades; and the number of employees per pay grade.

The City does use a single “ungraded” pay grade. An ungraded pay grade is one that does not include pay ranges.

The City’s pay plan includes 22 occupied pay grades that hold 149 employees. The pay range spreads fall between 17.6 - 41.3 percent. Pay grades 4, 6, and 21 only have one employee, while pay grade 2 contains the most employees with 20.

**EXHIBIT 3A
PAY PLAN SUMMARY**

Pay Plan	Grade	Minimum	Midpoint	Maximum	Range Spread	Midpoint Progression	Employees	
General	1	\$ 21,840	\$ 25,022	\$ 28,205	29%	-	6	
	2	\$ 23,920	\$ 27,362	\$ 30,805	29%	9%	20	
	3	\$ 28,080	\$ 32,594	\$ 37,107	32%	19%	12	
	4	\$ 34,674	\$ 41,839	\$ 49,005	41%	28%	1	
	5	\$ 75,733	\$ 82,420	\$ 89,107	18%	97%	3	
	6	\$ 97,302	\$ 105,851	\$ 114,400	18%	28%	1	
	10	\$ 34,680	\$ 41,841	\$ 49,002	41%	-60%	8	
	11	\$ 36,720	\$ 44,302	\$ 51,884	41%	6%	3	
	13	\$ 40,800	\$ 49,225	\$ 57,649	41%	11%	19	
	14	\$ 43,860	\$ 52,917	\$ 61,973	41%	8%	17	
	15	\$ 45,900	\$ 55,378	\$ 64,855	41%	5%	10	
	16	\$ 49,980	\$ 60,300	\$ 70,620	41%	9%	4	
	17	\$ 53,040	\$ 63,992	\$ 74,944	41%	6%	11	
	18	\$ 57,120	\$ 68,915	\$ 80,709	41%	8%	6	
	19	\$ 60,180	\$ 72,607	\$ 85,033	41%	5%	5	
	20	\$ 65,280	\$ 78,759	\$ 92,238	41%	8%	5	
	21	\$ 69,360	\$ 83,682	\$ 98,003	41%	6%	1	
	22	\$ 76,500	\$ 92,296	\$ 108,092	41%	10%	2	
	23	\$ 82,620	\$ 99,680	\$ 116,740	41%	8%	2	
	25	\$ 103,020	\$ 124,293	\$ 145,565	41%	25%	4	
	26	\$ 115,260	\$ 139,060	\$ 162,859	41%	12%	2	
		-	-	-	-	-	-	7
	Total	-	-	-	-	-	-	149

Comparing the summary data in **Exhibit 3A** to best practices, a number of observations can be made regarding the City's pay plan. Based on the analysis of the pay plan, the following facts can be observed:

- Range spreads—generally set between 50-70 percent—are slightly narrower than you would typically see in the market today.
- The midpoint progression between grades is varied and does not increase in a consistent manner.
- The number of employees on each pay grade is widely varied with several grades having less than three employees.
- The minimum of any pay grade is \$21,840 while the maximum of any pay grade is \$162,859.



3.2 GRADE PLACEMENT ANALYSIS

The Grade Placement Analysis examines how employee salaries are distributed throughout the pay grades. This can help identify salary progression issues, which are usually accompanied by employee salaries that are clustered in segments of the pay grades. A clustering of employee salaries in the lower part of ranges can indicate a lack of salary progression for employees or a high level of employee turnover. A clustering of employee salaries in the high end of pay ranges can be a sign of high employee tenure or a sign that the pay ranges are behind market, forcing the organization to offer salaries near the maximum of the range to new hires. With regard to minimum and maximum salaries, employees at the grade minimum are typically newer to the organization or to the classification, while employees at the grade maximum are typically highly experienced and highly proficient in their classification. The Grade Placement Analysis examines how salaries compare to pay range minimums, midpoints, and maximums. Only pay grades with at least one incumbent are included in this analysis.

Exhibit 3B displays the percentage and number of employees compensated at their pay grade minimum and pay grade maximum. The percentages presented are based on the total number of employees in that grade. As can be seen in the exhibit, 1.3 percent (two total) of all employees are compensated at their pay grade's minimum. A larger percent of employees, 32.9 percent (49 total), are compensated at their pay grade's maximum.

EXHIBIT 3B
EMPLOYEES AT MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM BY GRADE

Grade	Employees	# at Min	% at Min	# at Max	% at Max
1	6	0	0.0%	6	100.0%
2	20	0	0.0%	10	50.0%
3	12	2	16.7%	6	50.0%
4	1	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
5	3	0	0.0%	3	100.0%
6	1	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
10	8	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
11	3	0	0.0%	2	66.7%
13	19	0	0.0%	3	15.8%
14	17	0	0.0%	3	17.6%
15	10	0	0.0%	2	20.0%
16	4	0	0.0%	2	50.0%
17	11	0	0.0%	5	45.5%
18	6	0	0.0%	2	33.3%
19	5	0	0.0%	2	40.0%
20	5	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
21	1	0	0.0%	1	100.0%
22	2	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
23	2	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
25	4	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
26	2	0	0.0%	2	100.0%
-	7	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	149	2	1.3%	49	32.9%

In addition to assessing the number of employees at minimum and maximum, an analysis was conducted to determine the number of employees below and above pay grade midpoint. The percentages refer to the percentage of employees in each pay grade that are above and below midpoint. **Exhibit 3C** displays the results of this analysis: a total of 39 employees are compensated below their pay grade midpoint—which is 26.2 percent of all employees for the City. There are 102 employees compensated above the midpoint of their pay grade, which is 68.5 percent of all employees.

**EXHIBIT 3C
EMPLOYEES ABOVE AND BELOW MIDPOINT BY PAY GRADE**

Grade	Employees	# < Mid	% < Mid	# > Mid	% > Mid
1	6	0	0.0%	6	100.0%
2	20	0	0.0%	20	100.0%
3	12	4	33.3%	8	66.7%
4	1	0	0.0%	1	100.0%
5	3	0	0.0%	3	100.0%
6	1	0	0.0%	1	100.0%
10	8	5	62.5%	3	37.5%
11	3	1	33.3%	2	66.7%
13	19	10	52.6%	9	47.4%
14	17	5	29.4%	12	70.6%
15	10	0	0.0%	10	100.0%
16	4	0	0.0%	4	100.0%
17	11	4	36.4%	7	63.6%
18	6	2	33.3%	4	66.7%
19	5	0	0.0%	4	80.0%
20	5	2	40.0%	3	60.0%
21	1	0	0.0%	1	100.0%
22	2	2	100.0%	0	0.0%
23	2	1	50.0%	1	50.0%
25	4	3	75.0%	1	25.0%
26	2	0	0.0%	2	100.0%
-	7	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	149	39	26.2%	102	68.5%

3.3 QUARTILE ANALYSIS

The last part of the Grade Placement Analysis is a detailed look at how salaries are distributed through pay grades, through a quartile analysis. Here, each pay grade is divided into four segments of equal width, called quartiles. The first quartile represents the first 25 percent of the pay range; the second quartile represents the part of the range above the first quartile up to the mathematical midpoint; the third quartile represents the part of the range from the midpoint to 75 percent of the pay range; and the fourth quartile represents the part of the range above the third quartile up to the pay range maximum. Employees are assigned to a quartile within their pay range based on their current salary.

The quartile analysis is used to determine the location of employee salary clusters. Quartile analysis helps identify whether clusters exist in specific quartiles of pay grades. Additionally, the amount of time the employee has spent at the organization is also analyzed, in order to observe any relationship between organizational tenure and salary progression. This information, while not definitive alone, can shed light on any root issues within the current compensation and classification plan when combined with market data and employee feedback.

Exhibit 3D shows the number of employees that are in each quartile of each grade, as well as the average overall tenure (i.e. how long an employee has worked for the City) by quartile. Overall, data provide that 6.4 percent of employees fall into Quartile 1 of their respective grade; 21.3 percent fall into Quartile 2; 17.0 percent fall into Quartile 3; and 55.3 percent fall into Quartile 4. While this distribution does not lead to a conclusion, data for average tenure do lead to determinations on the relationship between tenure and salary.

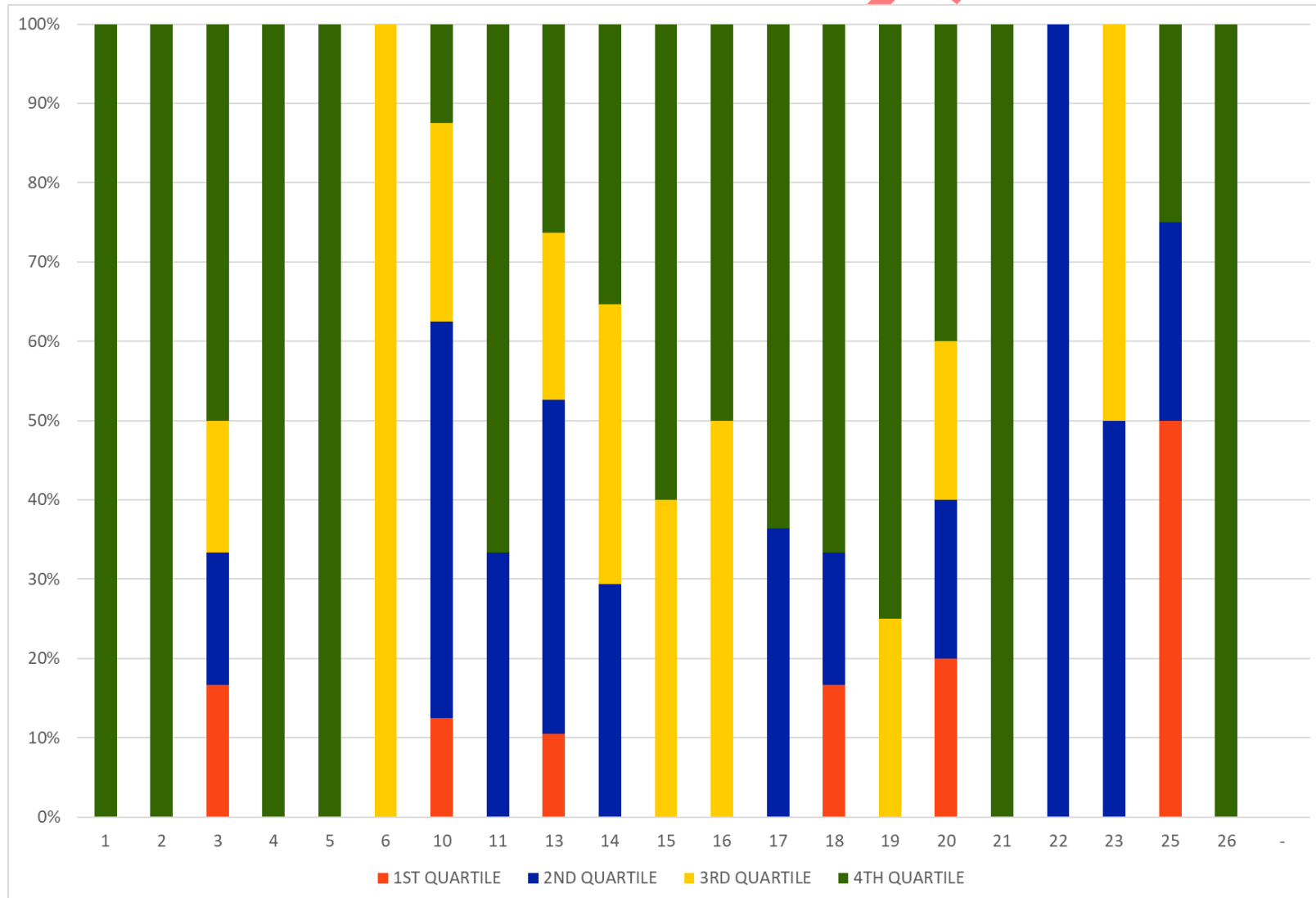
Specifically, overall average tenure increases as quartile increases; the average tenure in Quartile 1 is 1.4 years; in Quartile 2 is 4.0 years; in Quartile 3 is 6.9 years; and in Quartile 4 is 9.8 years. This would seem to indicate that employees are moved through their pay grades equitably, or at the very least a positive linear relationship exists between tenure and pay.

Exhibit 3E displays a graphical representation of the data contained in **Exhibit 3D**. Each pay grade is divided into up to four sections representing the percentage of employees, in that pay grade, who belong in each quartile. For example, pay grade 1 has zero employees in Quartiles 1, 2, or 3. That pay grade is represented by a 100 percent green bar, showing that 100 percent of grade 1 employees are in Quartile 4. Pay grade 3 has employees in all four quartiles, however, and is consequently represented with bars displaying all four colors, corresponding to the percentage of employees for each pay grade in each quartile.

**EXHIBIT 3D
QUARTILE ANALYSIS AND TIME WITH THE ORGANIZATION**

GRADE	Total Employees	Average Tenure	1st Quartile		2nd Quartile		3rd Quartile		4th Quartile	
			# Employees	Avg Tenure	# Employees	Avg Tenure	# Employees	Avg Tenure	# Employees	Avg Tenure
1	6	3.6	0	-	0	-	0	-	6	3.6
2	20	2.5	0	-	0	-	0	-	20	2.5
3	12	6.0	2	0.3	2	0.6	2	7.7	6	9.1
4	1	0.4	0	-	0	-	0	-	1	0.4
5	3	9.4	0	-	0	-	0	-	3	9.4
6	1	4.3	0	-	0	-	1	4.3	0	-
10	8	5.7	1	0.9	4	4.0	2	6.4	1	15.8
11	3	11.4	0	-	1	0.6	0	-	2	16.8
13	19	6.6	2	0.6	8	3.7	4	3.2	5	16.3
14	17	10.6	0	-	5	6.5	6	9.7	6	14.8
15	10	13.6	0	-	0	-	4	11.4	6	15.1
16	4	9.8	0	-	0	-	2	6.5	2	13.0
17	11	10.1	0	-	4	1.2	0	-	7	15.2
18	6	11.5	1	1.9	1	6.4	0	-	4	15.2
19	4	10.8	0	-	0	-	1	0.9	3	17.1
20	5	7.2	1	0.4	1	7.6	1	1.5	2	13.3
21	1	29.6	0	-	0	-	0	-	1	29.6
22	2	8.7	0	-	2	8.7	0	-	0	-
23	2	0.5	0	-	1	0.7	1	0.3	0	-
25	4	2.7	2	3.8	1	2.7	0	-	1	0.7
26	2	0.5	0	-	0	-	0	-	2	0.5
-	0	4.1	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
Overall	141	7.5	9	1.4	30	4.0	24	6.9	78	9.8

EXHIBIT 3E
 QUARTILE PLACEMENT BY PAY GRADE



Studying the data from the following exhibits can reveal certain patterns. One thing that can be observed is that as one Quartile is observed to the next, the percentage of employees occupying it generally increases. This could be a result of market competition increasing and the city responding by hiring and retaining individuals at higher points of their grade.. Another possible explanation is as you move to higher pay grades, positions are more competitive on the open market. There are typically more certifications required, more experience is desirable, and there are fewer employees available to fill the position. That requires the City to bid up the price of a new hire in order to attract high quality employees. It is impossible to determine why this pattern is occurring without more data. However, it is something that bears watching in the future, as the City could gather valuable information about itself.

3.4 SUMMARY

There were many observations made with respect to the City's compensation system in place at the beginning of the study.

- Range spreads, generally recommended to be between 50-70 percent, varies across several grades. The City's one plan has range spreads varying from 18 percent up to 41 percent.
- More than half of employees are paid above their pay grade midpoint.
- A little less than one quarter of employees (6.4 percent) are in Quartile 1 of their pay grade. This can indicate a workforce with high turnover or that has recently expanded with many new hires. Further analysis is required to determine the cause of this imbalance.

This analysis acts as a starting point for development of recommendations in subsequent chapters of this report. Paired with market data, Evergreen is able to make recommendations that will ensure that the City's compensation system is structurally sound in terms of best practice, competitive with the market, and treats all employees equitably moving forward.



Chapter 4 – Market Summary

The purpose of the market summary chapter is to benchmark the City's compensation practices against that of its market peers, in order to establish how competitive the City is with the market. One of the key study goals was to reestablish the City's competitive position in the marketplace. There was an anticipation by employees during the outreach process and initial meetings with the City project leadership team that the City pay ranges were not competitive. To deliver this primary study objective, Evergreen looked at average pay ranges across the entire classification to make the most accurate comparison. The results of this market study should be considered reflective of the current state of the market at the time of this study, however, market conditions can change rapidly. The current national trend for public sector employment has seen consistent increases of 5%. With a rapidly changing and increasing labor market, it is necessary to perform market surveys of peer organizations at regular intervals in order for an organization to consistently monitor its position within the market. Furthermore, the market results detailed in this chapter provide a foundation for understanding the City's overall structural standing in the market but are not the only compensation factor when building a modernized pay plan. The updated pay ranges reported in this chapter, while an important factor, are not the sole determinant for how classifications were placed into the proposed salary ranges outlined in **Chapter 6**.

Evergreen conducted a comprehensive market salary survey for the City, which included soliciting 22 target peer organizations (18 cities and one county) for 70 benchmark positions. Of the 22 total organizations contacted, 14 responded and provided data for the benchmark positions. Target peers were selected based on a number of factors, including geographic proximity, resource level, job overlap, and size. Target organizations were also identified for their competition to the City for employee recruitment and retention efforts. The final list of market peers was developed through the feedback received from City employees during in-person outreach sessions, collaboration with the City project leadership team and recommendations provided by Evergreen consultants. A draft targets and benchmarks file was created and submitted to the City project leadership team for approval prior to soliciting the market for salary data used when creating the market survey results. The list of targets that provided data for the purpose of this study are included in **Exhibit 4A**.



**EXHIBIT 4A
RESPONDENT MARKET PEERS**

Respondent Organizations
Coconut Creek, FL
Coral Springs, FL
Dania Beach, FL
Deerfield Beach, FL
Ft. Pierce, FL
Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Hallandale, FL
Hollywood, FL
Lauderhill, FL
Lauderdale Lakes, FL
Lighthouse Point, FL
Miramar, FL
Oakland Park, FL
Parkland, FL
Plantation, FL
Town of Davie, FL
West Palm Beach, FL
Sunrise, FL
Pompano, FL
Margate, FL
Tamarac, FL
Broward County, FL

Because the data collected for the market summary was from various regions, it was necessary to adjust peer responses relative to the City based on cost-of-living. For all organizations that fell outside the City's immediate region, a cost-of-living adjustment was applied to the reported pay ranges to ensure a market average was attained in terms of the spending power an employee would have in the City's local area. Evergreen utilizes cost-of-living index information from the Council for Community and Economic Research. For peer cities, the cost-of-living index is applied based on the county in which the city is located. Cost of Living figures for the City and each of the respondent market peers are located in **Exhibit 4B**.



EXHIBIT 4B
RESPONDENTS WITH COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENTS

Organization	Cost of Living
City of Cooper City	109.2
Coconut Creek, FL	109.2
Coral Springs, FL	109.2
Dania Beach, FL	109.2
Deerfield Beach, FL	109.2
Ft. Pierce, FL	97.8
Ft. Lauderdale, FL	109.2
Hallandale, FL	109.2
Hollywood, FL	109.2
Lauderhill, FL	109.2
Lauderdale Lakes, FL	109.2
Lighthouse Point, FL	109.2
Miramar, FL	109.2
Oakland Park, FL	109.2
Parkland, FL	109.2
Plantation, FL	109.2
Town of Davie, FL	109.2
West Palm Beach, FL	115.4
Sunrise, FL	109.2
Pompano, FL	109.2
Margate, FL	109.2
Tamarac, FL	109.2
Broward County, FL	109.2

4.1 MARKET DATA

The results of the market study are displayed in **Exhibit 4C**, which includes the benchmark job titles and the market average salaries for each position at the minimum, midpoint, and maximum points of the pay ranges. Also included within the exhibit are the percent differentials of the City's pay ranges at each respective point, relative to the market average pay. A positive percent differential is indicative of the City's pay range exceeding that of the average of its market peers; alternatively, a negative percent differential indicates the City's compensation for a given position lagging behind the average of its peers. For those classifications where no differential is shown, this is due to the City not possessing a pay range for comparison to the market. The exhibit also includes the average pay range for the market respondents for each position, as well as how many responses each benchmark received.

While all benchmarks are included in the survey, not every peer organization possesses an appropriate match. Consequently, the benchmarks receive varying levels of response. For the purpose of this study, all positions that received fewer than five matches from market peers were not considered in establishing the City's competitive position. Federal guidelines require having at least five responses to be included in the survey results. Of the 70 positions surveyed, 68 had a sufficient response for inclusion.



EXHIBIT 4C MARKET SURVEY RESULTS

ID	Classification	Survey Minimum		Survey Midpoint		Survey Maximum		Survey Avg Range	# Resp.
		Average	% Diff	Average	% Diff	Average	% Diff		
1	Administrative Specialist	\$40,004.75	2.0%	\$50,089.17	-1.7%	\$60,173.59	-4.3%	50.4%	13
2	Budget Analyst	\$62,020.74	-29.9%	\$78,430.82	-34.5%	\$94,840.90	-37.6%	52.9%	10
3	COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR	\$57,123.32	0.0%	\$71,252.65	-3.3%	\$85,381.98	-5.6%	49.5%	5
4	Executive Assistant to Elected Officials	\$56,195.86	1.6%	\$70,949.06	-2.9%	\$85,702.25	-6.0%	52.5%	12
5	Senior Administrative Specialist	\$43,624.33	0.5%	\$54,896.42	-3.7%	\$66,168.50	-6.5%	51.7%	11
6	Assistant City Clerk	\$64,575.79	-12.3%	\$82,058.39	-17.4%	\$99,540.98	-20.9%	54.1%	7
7	City Clerk	\$99,908.61	-18.9%	\$128,128.19	-25.0%	\$156,347.78	-29.0%	56.5%	8
8	Planner	\$57,238.29	-0.2%	\$72,987.64	-5.7%	\$88,737.00	-9.5%	55.0%	13
9	Administrative Coordinator	\$50,712.95	4.5%	\$63,909.14	0.1%	\$77,105.34	-2.8%	52.0%	9
10	Building Inspector	\$66,311.16	-9.7%	\$82,423.06	-12.7%	\$98,534.96	-14.7%	48.6%	7
11	Assistant Community Development	\$90,134.21	-16.4%	\$114,890.22	-21.8%	\$139,646.22	-25.5%	54.9%	8
12	Building Official	\$105,942.29	-8.5%	\$135,759.51	-24.8%	\$165,576.73	-36.6%	56.3%	10
13	METER READER	\$36,778.30	-26.8%	\$46,717.51	-35.6%	\$56,656.73	-41.7%	54.0%	7
14	Customer Service Representative II	\$39,138.44	4.2%	\$48,857.53	0.7%	\$58,576.61	-1.6%	49.7%	6
15	Customer Service Representative III	\$45,312.59	-3.3%	\$56,275.10	-6.2%	\$67,237.60	-8.1%	48.4%	7
16	Accounting Technician	\$40,920.56	-0.3%	\$51,910.39	-5.3%	\$62,900.22	-8.7%	53.7%	12
17	Senior IT Technician	\$58,281.48	3.2%	\$73,643.16	-1.4%	\$89,004.83	-4.6%	52.7%	6
18	Accountant	\$57,716.75	-8.4%	\$73,777.87	-14.2%	\$89,839.00	-18.1%	55.6%	13
19	Purchasing Agent	\$59,111.50	1.8%	\$75,117.44	-3.4%	\$91,123.38	-6.9%	54.1%	11
20	Information Systems Manager	\$75,008.12	2.0%	\$98,092.33	-6.1%	\$121,176.55	-11.4%	61.6%	5
21	Assistant Finance Director	\$101,667.67	-20.7%	\$131,016.41	-27.2%	\$160,365.15	-31.5%	57.7%	11
22	Finance Director/CFO	\$129,613.74	-11.7%	\$165,974.28	-17.6%	\$202,334.81	-21.6%	56.1%	12
23	City Manager	\$194,485.05		\$240,132.29		\$285,779.54		46.9%	2
24	Human Resources Programs Administrator	\$61,411.55	-2.0%	\$77,385.29	-6.4%	\$93,359.03	-9.3%	52.0%	10
25	Human Resources Director/Risk Manager	\$121,945.96	-16.8%	\$155,873.34	-22.5%	\$189,800.71	-26.4%	55.6%	12
26	Maintenance Technician II	\$39,470.81	-12.9%	\$49,799.14	-17.4%	\$60,127.46	-20.4%	52.3%	11
27	Customer Service Representative I	\$36,758.11	-5.8%	\$45,970.73	-9.4%	\$55,183.34	-11.9%	50.1%	10
28	Tradesworker I	\$42,956.53	-5.1%	\$54,418.44	-10.0%	\$65,880.36	-13.3%	53.3%	9
29	Tradesworker II	\$49,697.25	-12.5%	\$62,034.18	-15.9%	\$74,371.11	-18.2%	49.6%	6
30	Equipment Operator	\$39,797.98	9.7%	\$50,072.19	5.5%	\$60,346.40	2.7%	51.6%	11
31	Fleet Mechanic	\$44,001.87	4.2%	\$55,397.61	0.0%	\$66,793.35	-2.9%	51.8%	11
32	Horticultural Technician	\$39,008.17	4.5%	\$50,162.59	-1.9%	\$61,317.00	-6.2%	57.1%	6
33	Structural Inspector/Plans Examiner (FT)	\$69,688.93	-6.5%	\$86,886.20	-9.8%	\$104,083.46	-12.1%	49.4%	7
34	Public Works Coordinator	\$53,246.95	20.3%	\$67,166.55	15.9%	\$81,086.16	12.9%	52.3%	5
35	Facility Maintenance Supervisor	\$59,936.41	8.5%	\$75,264.06	4.5%	\$90,591.71	1.8%	51.1%	11
36	Fleet Maintenance Supervisor	\$63,761.72	-5.8%	\$81,404.27	-11.4%	\$99,046.83	-15.2%	55.3%	9
37	Chief Structural Inspector (FT)	\$68,510.14	-4.8%	\$86,760.28	-9.7%	\$105,010.42	-13.0%	53.3%	9
38	STRUCTURAL INSPECTOR/PLANS	\$72,244.63	4.7%	\$90,713.50	-9.6%	\$109,182.36	-20.2%	51.1%	11
39	CHIEF ELECTRICAL INSPECTOR	\$75,156.34	0.8%	\$94,622.02	-13.8%	\$114,087.69	-24.6%	51.8%	10
40	Assistant Building Official/Chief Plumbing	\$86,805.25	-13.6%	\$110,105.14	-28.8%	\$133,405.04	-39.8%	53.7%	10
41	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR	\$117,232.30	-12.9%	\$147,102.39	-16.8%	\$176,972.48	-19.5%	51.0%	5
42	Public Works Director	\$120,095.06	-15.3%	\$155,238.87	-22.1%	\$190,382.69	-26.7%	58.5%	8
43	Lifeguard II/WSI	\$33,577.79	-33.6%	\$42,477.42	-43.3%	\$51,377.05	-50.1%	53.0%	8
44	Park Attendant	\$31,283.40	-26.7%	\$40,156.84	-37.9%	\$49,030.28	-45.7%	56.7%	6
45	YOUTH PROGRAM INSTRUCTOR	\$31,042.27	-10.0%	\$39,895.71	-20.1%	\$48,749.15	-27.1%	57.0%	8
46	ADULT PROGRAM RECREATION AIDE	\$31,495.92	-11.5%	\$40,625.66	-21.9%	\$49,755.40	-29.1%	57.9%	9
47	Swim Coach	\$30,435.16	-8.0%	\$39,491.59	-19.1%	\$48,548.03	-26.7%	59.5%	6
48	Head Lifeguard	\$39,551.17	-13.1%	\$50,040.17	-17.8%	\$60,529.17	-21.0%	53.0%	9
49	Recreation Specialist (Recreation Leader)	\$38,018.54	-9.2%	\$47,797.81	-13.3%	\$57,577.09	-16.1%	51.4%	8
50	Program Instructor	\$33,713.30	-8.2%	\$43,324.97	-28.3%	\$52,936.64	-35.2%	56.9%	5
51	PARK RANGER	\$38,676.31	-5.2%	\$49,123.23	-10.3%	\$59,570.16	-13.8%	54.0%	10
52	Adult Program Specialist	\$44,055.49	-0.4%	\$56,079.24	-5.8%	\$68,102.98	-9.4%	54.6%	7
53	Facility and Recreation Assistant	\$36,455.39	0.7%	\$46,788.15	-5.5%	\$57,120.91	-9.6%	56.7%	5
54	Parks & Recreation Manager (Parks and Recreation Coordinator)	\$61,259.27	-14.4%	\$79,185.24	-21.2%	\$97,111.22	-25.8%	58.5%	10
55	Parks & Recreation Assistant Director (Parks and Recreation Supervisor)	\$86,607.21	-36.0%	\$111,028.76	-41.8%	\$135,450.31	-45.7%	56.4%	12
56	Parks and Recreation Director	\$118,219.91	-13.7%	\$150,191.98	-18.9%	\$182,164.04	-22.3%	54.1%	11
57	Utilities Mechanic I	\$44,997.84	-9.8%	\$56,568.45	-13.9%	\$68,139.05	-16.7%	51.4%	11
58	Treatment Plant Operator Trainee	\$41,143.22	6.4%	\$50,967.07	3.8%	\$60,790.92	1.9%	47.8%	5
59	Utilities Mechanic II	\$47,148.99	-2.7%	\$58,467.05	-5.4%	\$69,785.10	-7.3%	48.0%	9
60	Treatment Plant Operator I	\$48,501.36	-5.5%	\$61,308.79	-10.2%	\$74,116.21	-13.3%	52.8%	9
61	Treatment Plant Operator II	\$51,467.01	-2.9%	\$65,167.40	-7.8%	\$78,867.80	-11.0%	53.2%	7
62	Utilities Electrician	\$51,391.72	-2.8%	\$65,212.63	-7.8%	\$79,033.53	-11.2%	53.8%	11
63	Utilities Supervisor (Utilities Foreman)	\$61,590.15	-14.9%	\$77,042.31	-18.5%	\$92,494.46	-21.0%	50.2%	11
64	Engineering Inspector/Plans Examiner	\$59,393.73	-11.3%	\$73,763.35	-14.2%	\$88,132.96	-16.2%	48.4%	9
65	Field Operations Superintendent (Field Operations Supervisor)	\$74,474.03	-13.2%	\$92,964.22	-16.5%	\$111,454.41	-18.9%	49.7%	5
66	Chief Plant Operator	\$59,322.16	-3.8%	\$75,725.57	-9.4%	\$92,128.98	-13.2%	55.3%	4
67	Plant Operations Superintendent (Plant Operations Supervisor)	\$70,149.15	-1.1%	\$89,053.48	-6.2%	\$107,957.81	-9.7%	53.9%	9
68	Utilities Director/City Engineer	\$112,846.54	2.1%	\$144,581.44	-3.9%	\$176,316.34	-7.9%	56.2%	8
69	Assistant Utilities Director	\$93,859.66	-1.5%	\$120,389.20	-6.8%	\$146,918.74	-10.3%	56.5%	7
70	ERP Administrator	\$60,291.58	-12.8%	\$75,647.29	-16.7%	\$91,003.00	-19.4%	50.9%	6
	Overall Average		-7.0%		-12.9%		-16.9%	53.3%	8.6
	Outliers Removed*		-6.2%		-12.0%		-16.0%	53.4%	8.8



4.2 SALARY SURVEY RESULTS

Market Minimums

It is important to assess where an organization is relative to its market minimum salaries, as they are the beginning salaries of employees with minimal qualifications for a given position. Organizations that are significantly below market may experience recruitment challenges with entry-level employees. As seen in **Exhibit 4C**, the City is currently 6.2 percent below the market average minimum, when considering positions with sufficient responses. The City's benchmark positions ranged from 36.0 percent below to 9.7 percent above at the market minimum.

The following points are regarding the City's position relative to the market average minimum:

- Of these 68 positions, 51 were below market, averaging 11.0 percent below. These 51 classifications represent roughly 75.0 percent of the surveyed positions receiving sufficient response.
- Of the 51 positions below market, 26 were more than 10 percent below the average market minimum. These positions are displayed in **Exhibit 4D**.

EXHIBIT 4D CLASSIFICATIONS MORE THAN 10 PERCENT BELOW THE MINIMUM

Classification	% Diff
Parks & Recreation Assistant Director (Parks and Recreation Supervisor)	-36.0%
Lifeguard II/WSI	-33.6%
Budget Analyst	-29.9%
METER READER	-26.8%
Park Attendant	-26.7%
Assistant Finance Director	-20.7%
City Clerk	-18.9%
Program Instructor	-18.2%
Human Resources Director/Risk Manager	-16.8%
Assistant Community Development Director	-16.4%
Public Works Director	-15.3%
Utilities Supervisor (Utilities Foreman)	-14.9%
Parks & Recreation Manager (Parks and Recreation Coordinator)	-14.4%
Parks and Recreation Director	-13.7%
Assistant Building Official/Chief Plumbing an	-13.6%
Field Operations Superintendent (Field Operations Supervisor)	-13.2%
Head Lifeguard	-13.1%
Maintenance Technician II	-12.9%
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR	-12.9%
ERP Administrator	-12.8%
Tradesworker II	-12.5%
Assistant City Clerk	-12.3%
Finance Director/CFO	-11.7%
ADULT PROGRAM RECREATION AIDE	-11.5%
Engineering Inspector/Plans Examiner	-11.3%
YOUTH PROGRAM INSTRUCTOR	-10.0%



- Of these 68 positions, 17 were above market, averaging 3.6 percent above. These 17 classifications represent roughly 25.0 percent of the surveyed positions receiving sufficient response.
- Of the 17 positions above market, 17 were above the average market minimum. These positions are displayed in **Exhibit 4E**.

**EXHIBIT 4E
CLASSIFICATIONS ABOVE THE MINIMUM**

Classification	% Diff
Equipment Operator	9.7%
Facility Maintenance Supervisor	8.5%
Treatment Plant Operator Trainee	6.4%
STRUCTURAL INSPECTOR/PLANS EXAMINER (PT)	4.7%
Horticultural Technician	4.5%
Administrative Coordinator	4.5%
Fleet Mechanic	4.2%
Customer Service Representative II	4.2%
Senior IT Technician	3.2%
Utilities Director/City Engineer	2.1%
Information Systems Manager	2.0%
Administrative Specialist	2.0%
Purchasing Agent	1.8%
Executive Assistant to Elected Officials	1.6%
CHIEF ELECTRICAL INSPECTOR	0.8%
Facility and Recreation Assistant	0.7%
Senior Administrative Specialist	0.5%

Market Midpoints

The market midpoint is exceptionally important to analyze, as it is often considered the closest estimation of market average compensation. As seen in **Exhibit 4C**, the City is currently 12 percent below the market average midpoint, when considering positions with sufficient responses. The City's benchmark positions ranged from 43.3 percent below to 5.5 percent above at the market midpoint.

The following points are regarding the City's position relative to the market average midpoint:

- Of these 68 positions, 63 were below market, averaging 14.5 percent below. These 63 classifications represent roughly 92.6 percent of the surveyed positions receiving sufficient response.
- Of the 63 positions below market, 37 were more than 10 percent below the average market minimum. These positions are displayed in **Exhibit 4F**.



EXHIBIT 4F
CLASSIFICATIONS MORE THAN 10 PERCENT BELOW THE MIDPOINT

Classification	% Diff
Lifeguard II/WSI	-43.3%
Parks & Recreation Assistant Director (Parks and Recreation Supervisor)	-41.8%
Park Attendant	-37.9%
METER READER	-35.6%
Budget Analyst	-34.5%
Assistant Building Official/Chief Plumbing an	-28.8%
Program Instructor	-28.3%
Assistant Finance Director	-27.2%
City Clerk	-25.0%
Building Official	-24.8%
Human Resources Director/Risk Manager	-22.5%
Public Works Director	-22.1%
ADULT PROGRAM RECREATION AIDE	-21.9%
Assistant Community Development Director	-21.8%
Parks & Recreation Manager (Parks and Recreation Coordinator)	-21.2%
YOUTH PROGRAM INSTRUCTOR	-20.1%
Swim Coach	-19.1%
Parks and Recreation Director	-18.9%
Utilities Supervisor (Utilities Foreman)	-18.5%
Head Lifeguard	-17.8%
Finance Director/CFO	-17.6%
Assistant City Clerk	-17.4%
Maintenance Technician II	-17.4%
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR	-16.8%
ERP Administrator	-16.7%
Field Operations Superintendent (Field Operations Supervisor)	-16.5%
Tradesworker II	-15.9%
Accountant	-14.2%
Engineering Inspector/Plans Examiner	-14.2%
Utilities Mechanic I	-13.9%
CHIEF ELECTRICAL INSPECTOR	-13.8%
Recreation Specialist (Recreation Leader)	-13.3%
Building Inspector	-12.7%
Fleet Maintenance Supervisor	-11.4%
PARK RANGER	-10.3%
Treatment Plant Operator I	-10.2%
Tradesworker I	-10.0%

- Of these 68 positions, five were above market, averaging 2.9 percent above. These five classifications represent roughly 7.4 percent of the surveyed positions receiving sufficient response.
- Of the five positions above market, five were above the average market midpoint. These positions are displayed in **Exhibit 4G**.



**EXHIBIT 4G
CLASSIFICATIONS ABOVE THE MIDPOINT**

Classification	% Diff
Equipment Operator	5.5%
Facility Maintenance Supervisor	4.5%
Treatment Plant Operator Trainee	3.8%
Customer Service Representative II	0.7%
Administrative Coordinator	0.1%

Market Maximums

The pay range maximum averages, and how they compare to the City's, are also detailed in **Exhibit 4C**. As seen in **Exhibit 4C**, the City is currently 16 percent below the market average maximum, when considering positions with sufficient responses. The City's benchmark positions ranged from 50.1 percent below to 2.7 percent above at the market maximum.

The following points are regarding the City's position relative to the market average maximum:

- Of these 68 positions, 65 were below market, averaging 18.2 percent below. These 65 classifications represent roughly 4.4 percent of the surveyed positions receiving sufficient response.
- Of the 65 positions below market, 45 were more than 10 percent below the average market maximum. These positions are displayed in **Exhibit 4H**.



EXHIBIT 4H
CLASSIFICATIONS MORE THAN 10 PERCENT BELOW THE MAXIMUM

Classification	% Diff
Lifeguard II/WSI	-50.1%
Parks & Recreation Assistant Director (Parks and Recreation Supervisor)	-45.7%
Park Attendant	-45.7%
METER READER	-41.7%
Assistant Building Official/Chief Plumbing an	-39.8%
Budget Analyst	-37.6%
Building Official	-36.6%
Program Instructor	-35.2%
Assistant Finance Director	-31.5%
ADULT PROGRAM RECREATION AIDE	-29.1%
City Clerk	-29.0%
YOUTH PROGRAM INSTRUCTOR	-27.1%
Swim Coach	-26.7%
Public Works Director	-26.7%
Human Resources Director/Risk Manager	-26.4%
Parks & Recreation Manager (Parks and Recreation Coordinator)	-25.8%
Assistant Community Development Director	-25.5%
CHIEF ELECTRICAL INSPECTOR	-24.6%
Parks and Recreation Director	-22.3%
Finance Director/CFO	-21.6%
Head Lifeguard	-21.0%
Utilities Supervisor (Utilities Foreman)	-21.0%
Assistant City Clerk	-20.9%
Maintenance Technician II	-20.4%
STRUCTURAL INSPECTOR/PLANS EXAMINER (PT)	-20.2%
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR	-19.5%
ERP Administrator	-19.4%
Field Operations Superintendent (Field Operations Supervisor)	-18.9%
Tradesworker II	-18.2%
Accountant	-18.1%
Utilities Mechanic I	-16.7%
Engineering Inspector/Plans Examiner	-16.2%
Recreation Specialist (Recreation Leader)	-16.1%
Fleet Maintenance Supervisor	-15.2%
Building Inspector	-14.7%
PARK RANGER	-13.8%
Treatment Plant Operator I	-13.3%
Tradesworker I	-13.3%
Chief Structural Inspector (FT)	-13.0%
Structural Inspector/Plans Examiner (FT)	-12.1%
Customer Service Representative I	-11.9%
Information Systems Manager	-11.4%
Utilities Electrician	-11.2%
Treatment Plant Operator II	-11.0%
Assistant Utilities Director	-10.3%



- Of these 68 positions, three were above market, averaging 2.1 percent above. These three classifications represent roughly 4.4 percent of the surveyed positions receiving sufficient response.
- Of the three positions above market, three were above the average market maximum. These positions are displayed in **Exhibit 4I**.

**EXHIBIT 4I
CLASSIFICATIONS ABOVE THE MAXIMUM**

Classification	% Diff
Equipment Operator	2.7%
Treatment Plant Operator Trainee	1.9%
Facility Maintenance Supervisor	1.8%

4.3 SALARY SURVEY CONCLUSION

The standing of individual classifications pay range relative to the market should not be considered a definitive assessment of actual employee salaries being similarly above or below the market; however, such differentials can, in part, explain symptomatic issues with recruitment and retention of employees.

The main summary points of the market study are as follows:

- Overall, employee actual salaries are in a more competitive position than the current City approved salary ranges. The City approved salary ranges have remained unchanged causing some employees to reach, and in some cases, exceed the maximum of their pay range.
- The City's pay ranges are below the market minimum. With the current dynamic in the market, this can allude to difficulties recruiting new talent directly due to starting compensation or the organization adding to compression by bringing in new candidates ahead of the minimum, closer to or higher than wages of established employees.
- The City's pay ranges are approximately 12 percent below the market midpoint. An analysis of the pay ranges compared at the market midpoint can be important to consider as the midpoint is often representative of tenure within the role or progression through the range with additional education or certifications. The City is at a competitive disadvantage to the market for experienced employees and could find themselves in a vulnerable position if pay ranges are not increased to meet the market.
- The City's pay ranges are approximately 16 percent below the market maximum. Comparing positions at the maximum can demonstrate the potential retention levels



in the City. Falling behind the competitive points at the market maximum can allude to a loss of experienced or tenured candidates or provide trouble recruiting external top end talent. Termination reports provided by the City indicate that 40 employees have left the City via voluntary termination in the 24 months before the start of the study.

- The City's pay range spread is approximately 38.9 percent, while its peers' pay range spread is 53.3 percent. That means that the City's salary scale is narrower than its peers. With the City slightly below the average compared to the market at the minimum, because it has a narrower spread it falls further behind compared to its peers at the higher end of the spectrum and trails away from the market by a notable percentage at the maximum.

The results of the market summary chapter are pivotal in the formulation of recommendations by Evergreen Solutions. By establishing the City's market position relative to its peers, Evergreen is better able to propose recommendations that enable the City to occupy its desired competitive position. For the City to achieve a key study goal to reestablish itself as an employer of choice within their region of Florida, adjustments to the salary ranges will need to be made.



Chapter 5 – Benefits Survey Results

As a component of this study, Evergreen conducted a benefits market analysis. A benefits analysis, much like a salary evaluation, represents a snapshot in time of what is available in peer organizations. The Benefit Survey can provide the organization with an understanding of the total compensation (salary and benefits) offered by its peers. It is important to realize that there are intricacies involved with benefits programs that are not captured by a benefits survey alone. It is also important to note that benefits may be updated at various times throughout the year due to varying renewal dates included with policies and Commission approval. The data included in this chapter may have changed from the time this chapter was originally written in March of 2023.

This information should be used as a cursory overview and not a line-by-line comparison since benefits can be weighted differently depending on the importance to the organization. It should also be noted that benefits are sometimes negotiated and acquired through third parties, so one-to-one comparisons can be difficult. The analysis in this chapter highlights aspects of the benefits survey that provide pertinent information and had high completion rates by target peers.

Exhibit 5A provides a list of the 11 target peers from which full or partial benefits data were obtained for this analysis.

EXHIBIT 5A BENEFITS SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Dania Beach
Lauderhill
Margate
Parkland
Sunrise
Hollywood
Fort Lauderdale
Miramar
Coconut Creek
Coral Springs
Broward County



5.1 EMPLOYEE INSURANCE COVERAGES AND MISCELLANEOUS BENEFITS

Exhibit 5B displays that the average number of health plans offered by peers (any combination of HMO, PPO, High Deductible, or other type of plan) is 2.4. Cooper City offers three types of health plans—two UHC Choice Plans and a UHC Choice HDHP.

EXHIBIT 5B OVERALL BENEFITS INFORMATION

Number of Plans	Peer Average	City of Cooper City, FL
Number of health plans offered	2.4	3

5.2 HEALTH PLANS

Exhibit 5C displays data on the types of health plans offered by peers. As can be seen, the number of plans was varied. 70 percent of peers offer an HMO plan, 50 percent offer a PPO plan, 50 percent of peers offer an HSA plan, and 20 percent offer some other type of plan. The data show that the percentage of an individual employee’s premium paid by the employer is, on average, 50.6 percent for HMO plans, 63.5 percent for PPO plans and 75.4 percent for HSA plans. For employee plus child plans, employers contribute 53.2 percent for HMO plans, 72.5 percent for PPO plans, 6.5 percent for HSA plans, and 0 percent for other plans. For employee plus spouse plans, employers contribute 51.3 percent for HMO plans, 76.3 percent for PPO plans, 54.8 percent for HSA plans, and 0 percent for other plans. For employee plus family plans, employers contribute 43.6 percent for HMO plans, 61.8 percent for PPO plans, 53.6 percent for HSA plans, and 0 percent for other plans. Shown at the bottom of **Exhibit 5C**, Evergreen surveyed respondents for health plan premiums paid by each entity.

For comparison purposes, a summary of the plans offered by Cooper City is displayed in **Exhibit 5D**. As can be seen, Cooper City offers three health plans—two UHC Choice Plans and one UHC HDHP plan to all employees. Cooper City covers 97.0 percent of the premiums for individual coverage for the UHC Choice Plan 1, 97.9 percent for the UHC Choice Plan 2, and 100 percent for the UHC HDHP plan; and 72.0 percent of the premiums for the UHC Choice Plan 1, 76.8 percent for the UHC Choice Plan 2, and 81.7 percent for the UHC HDHP plan employee plus family plans.



**EXHIBIT 5C
OVERVIEW OF HEALTH PLANS OFFERED BY PEERS**

Health Plan Premiums & Deductibles	Peer HMO Average	Peer PPO Average	Peer HSA Average	Other Plans Average
Percentage of peers offering each plan	70.0%	50.0%	50.0%	20.0%
DOLLAR AMOUNT (monthly) of employee premium paid by employer	\$809.53	\$518.63	\$878.87	-
PERCENTAGE (monthly) of employee premium paid by employer	50.6%	63.5%	75.4%	0.0%
DOLLAR AMOUNT (monthly) of employee premium paid by employee	\$431.63	\$332.42	\$392.96	\$26.26
PERCENTAGE (monthly) of employee premium paid by employee	49.4%	36.5%	24.6%	100.0%
Individual Maximum Deductible In Network	\$857.14	\$637.50	\$1,640.00	\$950.00
Individual Maximum Deductible Out of Network	-	\$1,725.00	\$2,750.00	\$750.00
DOLLAR AMOUNT (monthly) of employee plus child premium paid by employer	\$1,526.41	\$1,217.88	\$1,379.94	-
PERCENTAGE (monthly) of employee plus child premium paid by employer	53.2%	72.5%	46.5%	0.0%
DOLLAR AMOUNT (monthly) of employee plus child premium paid by employee	\$737.30	\$496.13	\$695.62	\$375.39
PERCENTAGE (monthly) of employee plus child premium paid by employee	46.8%	27.5%	53.5%	100.0%
Employee Plus Child Maximum Deductible In Network	\$1,750.00	\$2,000.00	\$3,600.00	\$1,900.00
Employee Plus Child Maximum Deductible Out of Network	-	\$5,000.00	\$5,333.33	\$1,500.00
DOLLAR AMOUNT (monthly) of employee plus spouse premium paid by employer	\$1,562.97	\$1,245.38	\$1,324.34	-
PERCENTAGE (monthly) of employee plus spouse premium paid by employer	51.3%	76.3%	54.8%	0.0%
DOLLAR AMOUNT (monthly) of employee plus spouse premium paid by employee	\$801.93	\$413.32	\$611.93	\$303.79
PERCENTAGE (monthly) of employee plus spouse premium paid by employee	48.7%	23.7%	45.2%	100.0%
Employee Plus Spouse Maximum Deductible In Network	\$1,750.00	\$2,000.00	\$3,600.00	\$1,900.00
Employee Plus Spouse Maximum Deductible Out of Network	-	\$5,000.00	\$5,333.33	\$1,500.00
DOLLAR AMOUNT (monthly) of employee plus family premium paid by employer	\$1,597.33	\$1,531.21	\$1,731.23	-
PERCENTAGE (monthly) of employee plus family premium paid by employer	43.6%	61.8%	53.6%	0.0%
DOLLAR AMOUNT (monthly) of employee plus family premium paid by employee	\$1,271.96	\$976.48	\$858.10	\$598.62
PERCENTAGE (monthly) of employee plus family premium paid by employee	56.4%	38.2%	46.4%	100.0%
Employee Plus Family Maximum Deductible In Network	\$1,928.57	\$1,275.00	\$3,580.00	\$1,900.00
Employee Plus Family Maximum Deductible Out of Network	-	\$3,450.00	\$5,875.00	\$1,500.00



**EXHIBIT 5D
HEALTH PLANS OFFERED BY THE CITY OF COOPER CITY, FL**

Health Plan Premiums & Deductibles	City of Cooper City, FL
DOLLAR AMOUNT (monthly) of employee premium paid by employer	UHC Choice Plus Plan 1 - \$1121.28 UHC Choice Plus Plan 2 - \$1080.26 UHC Choice Plus Plan 5 (HDHP) - \$1007.16
PERCENTAGE (monthly) of employee premium paid by employer	UHC Choice Plus Plan 1 - 93.3% UHC Choice Plus Plan 2 - 95.4% UHC Choice Plus Plan 5 (HDHP) - 100%
DOLLAR AMOUNT (monthly) of employee premium paid by employee	UHC Choice Plus Plan 1 - \$75.01 UHC Choice Plus Plan 2 - \$50.01 UHC Choice Plus Plan 5 (HDHP) - \$0
PERCENTAGE (monthly) of employee premium paid by employee	UHC Choice Plus Plan 1 - 6.7% UHC Choice Plus Plan 2 - 4.6% UHC Choice Plus Plan 5 (HDHP) - 0%
Individual Maximum Deductible In Network	UHC Choice Plus Plan 1 - \$250 UHC Choice Plus Plan 2 - \$250 UHC Choice Plus Plan 5 (HDHP) - \$1400
Individual Maximum Deductible Out of Network	UHC Choice Plus Plan 1 - \$500 UHC Choice Plus Plan 2 - \$500 UHC Choice Plus Plan 5 (HDHP) - \$2500
DOLLAR AMOUNT (monthly) of employee plus family premium paid by employer	UHC Choice Plus Plan 1 - \$1930.99 UHC Choice Plus Plan 2 - \$1895.47 UHC Choice Plus Plan 5 (HDHP) - \$1758.27
PERCENTAGE (monthly) of employee plus family premium paid by employer	UHC Choice Plus Plan 1 - 72.0% UHC Choice Plus Plan 2 - 76.8% UHC Choice Plus Plan 5 (HDHP) - 81.7%
DOLLAR AMOUNT (monthly) of employee plus family premium paid by employee	UHC Choice Plus Plan 1 - \$539.80 UHC Choice Plus Plan 2 - \$438.96 UHC Choice Plus Plan 5 (HDHP) - \$321.90
PERCENTAGE (monthly) of employee plus family premium paid by employee	UHC Choice Plus Plan 1 - 28.0% UHC Choice Plus Plan 2 - 23.2% UHC Choice Plus Plan 5 (HDHP) - 18.3%
Employee Plus Family Maximum Deductible In Network	UHC Choice Plus Plan 1 - \$500 UHC Choice Plus Plan 2 - \$500 UHC Choice Plus Plan 5 (HDHP) - \$2800
Employee Plus Family Maximum Deductible Out of Network	UHC Choice Plus Plan 1 - \$1000 UHC Choice Plus Plan 2 - \$1000 UHC Choice Plus Plan 5 (HDHP) - \$5000



In addition to questions regarding health care coverages, Evergreen asked peers to provide information on dental, vision, short-term disability, long-term disability, and life coverages.

Exhibit 5E shows that 20.0 percent of peers offer an employer paid dental insurance for employees, while 100.0 percent offer one or more employee paid dental plan options. The average cost to peers for employee only dental coverage is \$14.21 while the average employer cost for employee plus dependent coverage is \$24.90. This data should not be used as a foundation to make decisions. The employee's premiums for optional employee paid plans averaged \$24.27 for employee only coverage while the average employee cost for employee plus dependent coverage is \$64.28. Cooper City does offer an employer and employee paid dental plan; the employer paid dental premiums for both employee and employee plus dependent coverage are 30.08, the employee paid dental premiums for employee only coverage are \$0 while the employee plus dependent coverage is \$63.07.

EXHIBIT 5E DENTAL COVERAGE

Dental Offerings		Peer Percentage Offered	Average Number of Plans Offered	Average maximum monthly amount that the employee pays for employee only coverage	Average maximum monthly amount that the employee pays for employee plus dependent coverage	Average maximum monthly amount the employer pays for employee only coverage	Average maximum monthly amount the employer pays for employee plus dependent coverage
Dental Insurance	Employer Paid	20.0%	1.0	-	-	\$14.21	\$24.90
	City of Cooper City, FL	Yes	1.0	-	-	\$30.08	\$30.08
	Employee Paid	100.0%	2.0	\$25.27	\$64.28	-	-
	City of Cooper City, FL	Yes	1.0	\$0.00	\$63.07	-	-

Exhibit 5F shows that 20.0 percent of peers offer an employer paid vision insurance for employees, while 90.0 percent offer one or more employee paid vision plan options. The average cost to peers for employee only vision coverage is \$1.60 while the average employer cost for employee plus dependent is \$4.85. The employee's premiums for optional employee paid plans averaged \$5.24 for employee only coverage while the average employee cost for employee plus dependent coverage is \$12.30. Cooper City offers employer and employee paid vision insurance. The employee's premiums for employer paid plans are \$6.96, while the optional employee paid plans are \$0 for employee only coverage while the average employee cost for employee plus dependent coverage is \$10.79.

EXHIBIT 5F VISION COVERAGE

Vision Offerings		Peer Percentage Offered	Average Number of Plans Offered	Average maximum monthly amount that the employee pays for employee only coverage	Average maximum monthly amount that the employee pays for employee plus dependent coverage	Average maximum monthly amount the employer pays for employee only coverage	Average maximum monthly amount the employer pays for employee plus dependent coverage
Vision Plan	Employer Paid	20.0%	1	-	-	\$1.60	\$4.85
	City of Cooper City, FL	Yes	1.0	-	-	\$6.96	\$6.96
	Employee Paid	90.0%	1.4	\$5.24	\$12.30	-	-
	City of Cooper City, FL	Yes	1.0	\$0.00	\$10.79	-	-

For short-term disability coverage, 33.3 percent of responding peers offer an employer paid plan and 44.4 percent offer an employee paid plan as displayed in **Exhibit 5G**. On average, peers pay an average of 63.9 percent of salary at the time of a disability for the employer paid coverage. Cooper City does offer employer paid short-term disability coverage but does not offer employee paid short-term disability coverage. Cooper City pays \$400 per week at the time of disability.



Unlike short-term disability coverage, 88.9 percent of responding peers offer an employer paid long-term disability plan and 11.1 percent offer an employee paid plan as displayed in **Exhibit 5G**. On average, employer paid plans pay 62.0 percent of salary at the time of a disability and employee paid plans paid an average of 60 percent of salary. Cooper City provides an employer and employee paid long-term disability plan; both plans pay 60.0 percent of salary at the time of a disability.

EXHIBIT 5G
SHORT AND LONG-TERM DISABILITY COVERAGE

Disability Insurance		Peer Percentage Offered	Average Number of Plans Offered	Percentage of salary the employee receives
Short-Term Disability	Employer Paid	33.3%	2.0	63.9%
	City of Cooper City, FL	Yes	1.0	\$400/WEEK
Long-Term Disability	Employer Paid	88.9%	100.0%	62.0%
	City of Cooper City, FL	Yes	1.0	60.0%
	Employee Paid	11.1%	1.0	60.0%
	City of Cooper City, FL	Yes	1.0	60.0%

Exhibit 5H summarizes the life insurance offerings of responding peers and Cooper City. Overall, 100.0 percent of the responding peers offer life insurance and 100.0 percent indicated that they offer optional dependent coverage. Cooper City offers employer-paid life insurance and optional dependent coverage.

Of the responding peers, all indicated providing accidental death insurance, and all provide the option to purchase additional life insurance if desired. Cooper City does offer accidental death insurance and offers the option to purchase additional life insurance if desired.



**EXHIBIT 5H
LIFE INSURANCE**

Life Insurance	Peer Percentage Yes	Peer Average	City of Cooper City, FL
Is employer-paid life insurance offered?	100.0%	-	Yes
Cost (monthly) to employer for individual coverage	-	\$1,765.00	\$11.00
Dollar amount of death benefit	-	\$45,000.00	\$50,000.00
Is Optional dependent coverage offered?	100.0%	-	Yes
Can the employee purchase (additional) life insurance if desired?	100.0%	-	Yes
Is accidental death insurance provided?	100.0%	-	Yes

5.3 EAP, TUITION REIMBURSEMENT, 529 PLANS, & FINANCIAL PLANNING

Exhibit 5H displays questions regarding Employee Assistance Programs. As shown, 100 percent of participating peers offer EAP. For all the respondents, benefits are available to family members in addition to the employee. On average, peers provide 6.8 EAP visits per year. Cooper City offers EAP with 14 annual visits and allows the benefits to be available to family members in addition to the employee.

**EXHIBIT 5H
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

EAP	Peer Percentage Yes	Peer Average	City of Cooper City, FL
Is an EAP offered?	100.0%	-	Yes
Are benefits available to family members as well as the employee?	100.0%		Yes if insured
Provided	-	6.8	14

Exhibit 5I displays questions regarding Tuition Reimbursement. As shown, 100.0 percent of the responding peers indicated that they have provisions to provide some type of tuition reimbursement for employees. On average, peers tuition reimbursement limit was \$3,400. Cooper City offers tuition reimbursement that is grade based.



**EXHIBIT 5I
TUITION REIMBURSEMENT**

Tuition Reimbursement	Peer Percentage Yes	Peer Average	City of Cooper City, FL
Is Tuition Reimbursement offered?	100.0%	-	Yes
Tuition Reimbursement Limit	-	\$3,400.00	Grade Based

5.4 RETIREMENT

Exhibit 5J displays that the average number of plans offered by peers is 2.0 while Cooper City has four plans. Most respondents indicated that the plans are state plans.

**EXHIBIT 5J
NUMBER OF RETIREMENT PLANS**

Number of Plans	Peer Average	City of Cooper City, FL
Number of retirement plans offered	2.0	4

Exhibit 5K provides questions regarding retirement details. On average, participating peers offer 6.8 years to fully vest. COLA is offered to retiree pensions for 100 percent of participating peers. This COLA varies for all participating peers. As shown, 0 percent of participating peers' retirement plan offers a disability provision. For participating peers, average organization contribution to this retirement is 20.8 percent while the employee contributes, on average, 6.6 percent of their salary.

Similar to the market peers, Cooper City offers a state retirement plan to employees with additional offerings as well. Cooper City does not offer COLA to retiree pensions but does offer disability provisions. The City contributes 28.04 percent of salary to retirement options, while the employee will contribute either 10 or three percent depending on the retirement option. There is an additional contribution toward retirement for employees designated as Directors totaling for the City. Cooper City contributes the following match to employees participating in the Florida Retirement System (FRS):

- FRS Regular class 13.57%
- FRS Senior Management Class 34.52%



**EXHIBIT 5K
RETIREMENT DETAILS**

Retirement Details	Peer Average	City of Cooper City, FL
Years to Fully Vest	6.8	6
COLA Offered to Retiree Pensions	0.0%	-
Does the organization's retirement plan offer a disability provision?	50.0%	Yes
What percent of salary does the organization contribute to this retirement option?	20.8%	28.04 in General Employee
What percent of salary does the employee contribute to this retirement option?	6.6%	10% in General Employee 3% in FRS

Exhibit 5L shows that 45.5 percent offer additional retirement options. Of the respondents, 60.0 percent provide their employees with a D.R.O.P. retirement option. As can be seen, 81.8 percent of peer respondents offer a 401k, 401a, 403(b), 457, or similar plan. Cooper City does offer a D.R.O.P. retirement option and 401a and 457 options.

**EXHIBIT 5L
RETIREMENT OPTIONS**

Retirement Participation	Peer Percentage Yes	City of Cooper City, FL
Does the organization participate in a State Retirement System?	45.5%	Yes
Is a retirement option other than a state plan offered?	90.9%	Yes
Is D.R.O.P. offered?	60.0%	Yes
Is a 401k, 401a, 403(b), or 457 offered?	81.8%	401a & 457
Is a type of plan other than a 401k, 401a, 403(b) or 457 offered?	0.0%	No
Does the employer contribute to any of these non-state retirement options?	80.0%	No



Exhibit 5M shows that 80.0 percent of participating peers offer health insurance to retired employees. Additionally, 80.0 percent of respondents offer dental insurance to retired employees and 80.0 percent offer life insurance to retired employees. Cooper City offers health and dental insurance to retired employees.

EXHIBIT 5M INSURANCE FOR RETIREES

Insurance for Retirees	Peer Average	City of Cooper City, FL
Does your organization offer health insurance to retired employees?	80.0%	Yes
Does your organization offer dental insurance to retired employees?	80.0%	Yes
Does your organization offer life insurance to retired employees?	80.0%	No

5.5 EMPLOYEE LEAVE, HOLIDAYS, AND COMPENSATORY TIME

Exhibit 5N provides the average minimum and maximum accrual rates—the average years of service required to achieve the maximum accrual rate for Personal Leave, Sick Leave, Annual/Vacation Leave, and Paid Time off (PTO) leave for respondents.

EXHIBIT 5N LEAVE TIME ACCRUAL

Leave Accrual	Organization	Offered?	Minimum Accrual Rate (Monthly)	How many years of service does it require to begin to accrue the minimum rate?	Maximum Accrual Rate (Monthly)	Years to Achieve Maximum Accrual Rate	Maximum Allowed to Roll Over to Following Year
Sick Leave	Peer Percentage	100.0%	8.0	0.0	8.0	0.0	672.0
	Yes/Average City of Cooper City, FL	Yes	8 hours	0	8 hours	1.0	720.0
Annual/Vacation Leave	Peer Percentage	90.9%	6.1	0.1	12.0	11.7	316
	Yes/Average City of Cooper City, FL	Yes	6.67 hours	0	13.3	10.0	240.0
Personal Leave	Peer Percentage	55.6%	1.9	0.0	2.3	0.3	16
	Yes/Average City of Cooper City, FL	Yes	16 hours/year	6 months	16 hours/year	1 year	16
Paid-Time Off	Peer Percentage	12.5%	7.3	0.0	7.8	0.0	26
	Yes/Average City of Cooper City, FL	No	-	-	-	-	-



Cooper City does pay out sick leave upon voluntary but not involuntary separation and does pay out vacation leave upon voluntary but not involuntary separation (if the employee is in good standing) with no maximum.

**EXHIBIT 50
SICK AND VACATION LEAVE PAYOUT**

Sick Leave Policies	Peer Percentage Yes	Peer Average	City of Cooper City, FL
Is unused sick leave paid out upon voluntary separation?	100.0%	-	Yes
Max hours of sick leave paid out upon voluntary separation	-	732.0	5-10 years= 25% 10-15 years = 50% 15+ = 75%
Is unused sick leave paid out upon involuntary separation?	40.0%	-	No
Max hours of sick leave paid out upon involuntary separation	-	-	-
Can unused sick leave count towards retirement?	20.0%	-	No
Max hours of sick leave that can count towards retirement	-	-	-
Vacation Leave Policies	Peer Percentage Yes	Peer Average	City of Cooper City, FL
Is unused annual/vacation leave paid out upon voluntary separation?	100.0%	-	Yes
Max hours of annual/vacation leave paid out upon voluntary separation	-	470.0	240 hours
Is unused annual/vacation leave paid out upon involuntary separation?	60.0%	-	No
Max hours of annual/vacation leave paid out upon involuntary separation	-	470.0	-



The percentage of peers that offer various holidays are shown in **Exhibit 5P**. On average, peers offer 12.4 holidays to employees, compared to as many as 16 offered by Cooper City. Cooper City offers 12 paid holidays each year and the Commission has sometimes voted to approve 2 additional holidays. The City also provides employees with 2 personal days each year. Implementing a policy to maintain and increase holidays is a great way to improve employee work life balance with minimal impact to citizens and City service levels. When compared to the market, the City's paid holiday policy is better than peers and is an opportunity to create a competitive advantage for recruitment and retention.

RECOMMENDATION:

Implement a policy to make New Years Eve, Christmas Eve, Good Friday and Juneteenth paid holidays for City employees. Coordinating holidays with the local school district is another recommended benefit for the City to consider. When schools are closed, employees with children in school are required to coordinate and pay for childcare if they are scheduled to work on those days. The City could align its paid holidays with the school district to help reduce those costs and further improve employee engagement and satisfaction providing a competitive advantage for the City in the market.

EXHIBIT 5P HOLIDAYS

Paid Holiday observed by peer organizations	Peer Percentage Yes	City of Cooper City, FL
New Year's Day	100.0%	Yes
New Year's Eve	50.0%	Sometimes
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	100.0%	Yes
Lincoln's Birthday	0.0%	No
Washington's Birthday	90.0%	Yes
Presidents Day	0.0%	Yes
Good Friday	0.0%	No
Memorial Day	100.0%	Yes
Juneteenth	40.0%	No
Independence Day	100.0%	Yes
Labor Day	100.0%	Yes
Veteran's Day	100.0%	Yes
Thanksgiving Day	100.0%	Yes
Day after Thanksgiving	100.0%	Yes
Christmas Eve	60.0%	Sometimes
Christmas Day	100.0%	Yes
Personal Holiday	20.0%	No
Employee Birthday	30.0%	No
Columbus Day	30.0%	Yes
Other - Personal Days (2)	0.0%	Yes



Exhibit 5Q shows that 83.3 percent of participating peers offer longevity pay; 60.0 percent offer merit raises; none offer merit bonuses; and 50.0 percent offer some other incentive pay program. Cooper City offers longevity pay and other incentive pay programs, but does not offer merit raises and merit.

EXHIBIT 5Q INCENTIVE PAY PROGRAMS

Types of longevity pay, bonuses, allowances, or incentive pay programs.	Peer Percentage Yes	City of Cooper City, FL
Does your organization offer: Longevity Pay?	83.3%	Yes
Does your organization offer: Merit Raises?	60.0%	Yes
Does your organization offer: Merit Bonuses?	0.0%	No
Does your organization offer: other programs?	50.0%	No

5.6 SUMMARY

Overall, Cooper City was found to be very competitive with the market with respect to the benefits portion of total compensation. The health plan offerings in the City are highly competitive with the market with high percentages of employer contributions at all levels that help alleviate the cost to the employee. With employees' continued interest in work life balance, the City may choose to increase the number of holiday's offered and/or align with the school district to help provide employees additional time away from the workplace. Another consideration would be to expand remote and flexible work schedules, were possible, to further enhance employee satisfaction and retention. The recent increase in Director level retirement contributions also helps to enhance the overall benefits offerings and total compensation for those employees in positions of leadership. These results of this benefits survey demonstrate that Cooper City is positioned well compared to the market as it relates to benefits and Evergreen recognizes no significant deficiencies in total benefits that would place the City at a competitive disadvantage.

Benefits as a percentage of total compensation were 31.81%. When subtracting the Federally mandated FICA and WC benefits \$772,183 from the total FY23 Budgeted Benefits \$5,033,332, the total benefits costs equal \$4,261,149. Dividing this by FY23 Budgeted Wages of \$9,136,527 leaves a Benefits as a percentage of total compensation of 31.81%. (*these calculations provided by City Finance Department.) Benefits as a percentage of total compensation is slightly behind the local and state government average of 38% as reported by the Department of Labor in June of 2023.

When taken as a whole, the City's total benefits package appeared to be ahead of the market and, if combined with competitive wages, should support the City reestablishing itself as a competitive public sector employer in the region.



Chapter 6 - Recommendations

After reviewing the information provided in the preceding sections of this report, Evergreen developed recommendations to improve the City's current compensation and classification system. The recommendations, as well as the findings that led to each recommendation, are discussed in detail in this section. The recommendations are organized into three sections: classification, compensation, and administration of the system.

6.1 CLASSIFICATION RECOMMENDATIONS

An organization's classification system establishes how its human resources are employed to perform its core services. The classification system consists of the titles and descriptions of the different classifications, or positions, which define how work is organized and assigned. It is essential that the titles and descriptions of an organization's classifications accurately depict the work being performed by employees in the classifications in order to ensure equity within the organization and to enable comparisons with positions at peer organizations. The purpose of a classification analysis is to identify such issues as incorrect titles, outdated job descriptions, and inconsistent titles across departments. Recommendations are then made to remedy the identified concerns based on human resources best practices.

In the analysis of the City's classification system, Evergreen Solutions collected classification data through the Job Assessment Tool (JAT) process. The JATs, which were completed by employees and reviewed by their supervisors, provided information about the type and level of work being performed for each of the City's classifications. Evergreen reviewed the data provided in the JATs and used the information as the basis for classification recommendations. Employee participation in the JAT process far exceeded the national average with more than 82.43% of all employees completing a survey and 91% of all job classifications represented. This robust employee response helped provide a solid foundation for the classification recommendations. The high participation was also directly related to the efforts of the City project leadership team who was engaged throughout the process.



**EXHIBIT 6A
EMPLOYEE JOB ASSESSMENT TOOL PARTICIPATION**

Employee Summary		Supervisor Summary	
% Complete	% Incomplete	% Complete	% Incomplete
82.43%	17.57%	72.95%	27.05%

**EXHIBIT 6B
JOB CLASSIFICATIONS PARTICIPATION SUMMARY**

Classification Summary	
% Complete	% Incomplete
91.03%	8.97%

FINDING

The classification system being utilized by the City was generally accurate and the titles described the work being performed by employees. However, there were multiple classifications observed in the study process and in collaboration with staff where Evergreen is recommending updated titles.

Additionally, several of the City's classifications require some modification to better describe the work being performed to ensure the work is consistent with essential job functions.

RECOMMENDATION 1: Update existing class description to reflect the new classification system and review all updated descriptions for FLSA status.

In conjunction with the City making the proposed title changes, Evergreen will provide the City with updated classification descriptions to ensure they accurately reflect the work being carried out by employees. These are being provided under separate cover. Upon completion and approval of the proposed class descriptions, Evergreen will further recommend an updated FLSA status for the roles based on the new, updated content contained within the description. Overall, there were 34 classifications recommended for a title change or update as a result of the study. These recommendations are provided in **Exhibit 6C**.



EXHIBIT 6C RECOMMENDED CLASSIFICATION CHANGES

Department	Current Classification	Recommended Title	Comments
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	Assistant Building Official/Chief Plumbing	Assistant Building Official	
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	Mechanical Inspector	CHIEF MECHANICAL INSPECTOR	
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	Plumbing Inspector	CHIEF PLUMBING INSPECTOR	
FINANCE	IT TECH	SENIOR IT TECHNICIAN	
FINANCE	BUDGET ANALYST	SENIOR BUDGET ANALYST	
FINANCE	UTILITY BILLING/ACCOUNTING SUPERVISOR	Accounting Supervisor	
HUMAN RESOURCES	Human Resources Programs Administrator	Human Resources Generalist	Reclassification per Director request
Parks & Recreation	Parks and Recreation Supervisor	Parks and Recreation Manager	
Parks & Recreation	Facility and Recreation Assistant	General Services Worker	
Parks & Recreation	PARK RANGER	Senior Park Ranger	Reclassification per Director request
Parks & Recreation	Recreation Leader	Recreation Specialist	
Parks & Recreation	Swim Coach/Office Assistant	Swim Coach	
Parks & Recreation	Parks and Recreation Coordinator	Parks and Recreation Manager	
Parks & Recreation	Facility Attendant	Parks and Recreation Attendant	
Parks & Recreation	Park Attendant	Parks and Recreation Attendant	
Parks & Recreation	Adult Program Specialist	Parks and Recreation coordinator	Reclassification per Director request
Parks & Recreation	Aquatics Specialist	Parks and Recreation coordinator	Reclassification per Director request
Parks & Recreation	RECREATION ATTENDANT	Parks and Recreation Attendant	
PUBLIC WORKS	Maintenance Technician I	Building and Grounds Technician I	
PUBLIC WORKS	Maintenance Technician III	Building and Grounds Technician III	
PUBLIC WORKS		Facilities Maintenance Supervisor	
PUBLIC WORKS	Maintenance Technician II	Building and Grounds Technician II	
PUBLIC WORKS	Fleet Mechanic	Fleet Technician	
PUBLIC WORKS	Tradesworker II	HVAC Technician	
PUBLIC WORKS		Tradesworker III	Will require HVAC Certification
PUBLIC WORKS		Assistant Public Works Director	New classification recommended by Director.
UTILITIES	COORDINATOR	UTILITIES COORDINATOR	
UTILITIES	Mechanic Trainee	UTILITIES MECHANIC TRAINEE	
UTILITIES	Tradesworker I - UTIL	UTILITIES MECHANIC I	
UTILITIES	Utilities Foreman	UTILITIES SUPERVISOR	
UTILITIES	Utilities Electrician	ELECTRICIAN SUPERVISOR	Reclassification per Director request
UTILITIES	Field Operations Supervisor - UTIL	Field Operations Superintendent - UTIL	Reclassification per Director request
UTILITIES	Engineering Inspector	Engineering Inspector/PLANS EXAMINER	
UTILITIES		ELECTRICIAN ASSISTANT	New classification recommended by Director.

6.2 COMPENSATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The compensation analysis consisted of two parts: an external market assessment and an internal equity assessment. During the external market assessment, the City’s compensation for selected benchmark classifications was compared to average compensation offered by peers in the City of Cooper City labor market. The external assessment consisted of comparing the City against its peer organizations within its market and revealed the City is currently lagging the market.

During the internal equity assessment, consideration of the relationships between and the type of work being performed by the City’s employees in their classifications was reviewed and analyzed. Specifically, a composite score was assigned to each of the City’s classifications

that quantified the classification's level of five separate compensatory factors. The level for each factor was determined based on responses to the JAT.

FINDING

The City currently maintains a pay plan with pay ranges lagging the market and Evergreen found there were very narrow pay ranges with widely varied progression between grades leading to inconsistencies in how employees moved within the overall pay plan.

RECOMMENDATION 2: Adopt a new, market responsive, open range, compensation structure and assign all positions to it equitably.

Evergreen has provided an updated and modernized pay plan for the City's consideration. The new structure consists of 31 pay grades in an Open Range Plan with consistent market competitive pay ranges and standardized progression between pay grades of 5%. Evergreen is recommending pay ranges with a range spread of 55 percent between the minimum and the maximum of the range. The details of the proposed plans are located in **Exhibits 6D**.



**EXHIBIT 6D
PROPOSED PAY PLAN ANNUAL**

Grade	Minimum	Midpoint	Maximum	Range Spread	Midpoint Progression
101	\$ 29,120.00	\$ 37,128.00	\$ 45,136.00	55.0%	-
102	\$ 30,576.00	\$ 38,984.40	\$ 47,392.80	55.0%	5.0%
103	\$ 32,104.80	\$ 40,933.62	\$ 49,762.44	55.0%	5.0%
104	\$ 33,710.04	\$ 42,980.30	\$ 52,250.56	55.0%	5.0%
105	\$ 35,395.54	\$ 45,129.32	\$ 54,863.09	55.0%	5.0%
106	\$ 37,165.32	\$ 47,385.78	\$ 57,606.24	55.0%	5.0%
107	\$ 39,023.59	\$ 49,755.07	\$ 60,486.56	55.0%	5.0%
108	\$ 40,974.76	\$ 52,242.82	\$ 63,510.88	55.0%	5.0%
109	\$ 43,023.50	\$ 54,854.97	\$ 66,686.43	55.0%	5.0%
110	\$ 45,174.68	\$ 57,597.71	\$ 70,020.75	55.0%	5.0%
111	\$ 47,433.41	\$ 60,477.60	\$ 73,521.79	55.0%	5.0%
112	\$ 49,805.08	\$ 63,501.48	\$ 77,197.88	55.0%	5.0%
113	\$ 52,295.34	\$ 66,676.55	\$ 81,057.77	55.0%	5.0%
114	\$ 54,910.10	\$ 70,010.38	\$ 85,110.66	55.0%	5.0%
115	\$ 57,655.61	\$ 73,510.90	\$ 89,366.19	55.0%	5.0%
116	\$ 60,538.39	\$ 77,186.45	\$ 93,834.50	55.0%	5.0%
117	\$ 63,565.31	\$ 81,045.77	\$ 98,526.23	55.0%	5.0%
118	\$ 66,743.57	\$ 85,098.06	\$ 103,452.54	55.0%	5.0%
119	\$ 70,080.75	\$ 89,352.96	\$ 108,625.17	55.0%	5.0%
120	\$ 73,584.79	\$ 93,820.61	\$ 114,056.42	55.0%	5.0%
121	\$ 77,264.03	\$ 98,511.64	\$ 119,759.25	55.0%	5.0%
122	\$ 81,127.23	\$ 103,437.22	\$ 125,747.21	55.0%	5.0%
123	\$ 85,183.59	\$ 108,609.08	\$ 132,034.57	55.0%	5.0%
124	\$ 89,442.77	\$ 114,039.53	\$ 138,636.30	55.0%	5.0%
125	\$ 93,914.91	\$ 119,741.51	\$ 145,568.11	55.0%	5.0%
126	\$ 98,610.66	\$ 125,728.59	\$ 152,846.52	55.0%	5.0%
127	\$ 103,541.19	\$ 132,015.02	\$ 160,488.84	55.0%	5.0%
128	\$ 108,718.25	\$ 138,615.77	\$ 168,513.28	55.0%	5.0%
129	\$ 114,154.16	\$ 145,546.55	\$ 176,938.95	55.0%	5.0%
130	\$ 119,861.87	\$ 152,823.88	\$ 185,785.90	55.0%	5.0%
131	\$ 125,854.96	\$ 160,465.08	\$ 195,075.19	55.0%	5.0%
UNG	-	-	-	-	-



**EXHIBIT 6E
PROPOSED PAY PLAN HOURLY**

Grade	Minimum	Midpoint	Maximum	Range Spread	Midpoint Progression
101	\$ 14.00	\$ 17.85	\$ 21.70	55.0%	-
102	\$ 14.70	\$ 18.74	\$ 22.79	55.0%	5.0%
103	\$ 15.44	\$ 19.68	\$ 23.92	55.0%	5.0%
104	\$ 16.21	\$ 20.66	\$ 25.12	55.0%	5.0%
105	\$ 17.02	\$ 21.70	\$ 26.38	55.0%	5.0%
106	\$ 17.87	\$ 22.78	\$ 27.70	55.0%	5.0%
107	\$ 18.76	\$ 23.92	\$ 29.08	55.0%	5.0%
108	\$ 19.70	\$ 25.12	\$ 30.53	55.0%	5.0%
109	\$ 20.68	\$ 26.37	\$ 32.06	55.0%	5.0%
110	\$ 21.72	\$ 27.69	\$ 33.66	55.0%	5.0%
111	\$ 22.80	\$ 29.08	\$ 35.35	55.0%	5.0%
112	\$ 23.94	\$ 30.53	\$ 37.11	55.0%	5.0%
113	\$ 25.14	\$ 32.06	\$ 38.97	55.0%	5.0%
114	\$ 26.40	\$ 33.66	\$ 40.92	55.0%	5.0%
115	\$ 27.72	\$ 35.34	\$ 42.96	55.0%	5.0%
116	\$ 29.10	\$ 37.11	\$ 45.11	55.0%	5.0%
117	\$ 30.56	\$ 38.96	\$ 47.37	55.0%	5.0%
118	\$ 32.09	\$ 40.91	\$ 49.74	55.0%	5.0%
119	\$ 33.69	\$ 42.96	\$ 52.22	55.0%	5.0%
120	\$ 35.38	\$ 45.11	\$ 54.83	55.0%	5.0%
121	\$ 37.15	\$ 47.36	\$ 57.58	55.0%	5.0%
122	\$ 39.00	\$ 49.73	\$ 60.46	55.0%	5.0%
123	\$ 40.95	\$ 52.22	\$ 63.48	55.0%	5.0%
124	\$ 43.00	\$ 54.83	\$ 66.65	55.0%	5.0%
125	\$ 45.15	\$ 57.57	\$ 69.98	55.0%	5.0%
126	\$ 47.41	\$ 60.45	\$ 73.48	55.0%	5.0%
127	\$ 49.78	\$ 63.47	\$ 77.16	55.0%	5.0%
128	\$ 52.27	\$ 66.64	\$ 81.02	55.0%	5.0%
129	\$ 54.88	\$ 69.97	\$ 85.07	55.0%	5.0%
130	\$ 57.63	\$ 73.47	\$ 89.32	55.0%	5.0%
131	\$ 60.51	\$ 77.15	\$ 93.79	55.0%	5.0%
UNG	-	-	-	-	-

Implementation of the new compensation structure requires two steps. First, all positions were assigned to an appropriate pay grade within the overall plan. To determine what pay grade each position was assigned, Evergreen used the following factors: the results of the JAT analysis, the results of the market study, recommendations from the City project leadership team as well as consideration for both existing and newly created internal relationships between classifications. Assigning pay grades to classifications requires a

balance of internal equity and desired market position, and recruitment and retention concerns also played a role in the process. Thus, the market results discussed in **Chapter 4** were a primary factor but not the sole criteria for the proposed pay ranges.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Evergreen recommends the City adopt a methodology to transition employee salaries into the proposed pay plan that aligns with its established compensation philosophy and meets the available financial resources of the organization.

The second step in implementing the proposed structure is to transition employee salaries into their new recommended pay ranges. This step can be taken via a variety of methods, each with their own strengths and drawbacks. The implementation options and associated costs are for base salary adjusted for cost of living and include a 2% increase to salaries and \$10,000 cap for any single employee adjustment. These costs are shown in **Exhibit 6F**.

**EXHIBIT 6F
IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS AND COST SUMMARY**

Implementation Option	Total Salary-Only Cost	Number of Employees Adjusted	Average Adjustment for Impacted Employees	% of Payroll
Bring to Min	\$ 200,317.14	140	\$ 1,430.84	2.6%
Tenure Parity	\$ 393,616.56	140	\$ 2,811.55	5.1%
Compa Ratio	\$ 1,021,581.18	140	\$ 7,297.01	13.2%

Bring to Minimum

This methodology places employees into the new pay ranges at the minimum of the proposed pay range. If an employee current annual salary exceeds the new minimum, no adjustment is given; and, as such, no employee salary are reduced as a result of this implementation option. The benefit of this option is that employees are moved into new, market competitive pay ranges. The negative is this option does not correct any instances wage compression which are prevalent throughout the City. The cost to implement this option is **\$208,051.92** and impacts **147** employees.

30-Year Tenure Parity

This option consists of placing employees into their proposed pay ranges based on their "Tenure years." The parity effectively divides the pay range by 30, and places employees within their range based on their overall organizational tenure. For example, an employee who has been with the City for fifteen years would be placed at the midpoint of the range. If an employee's current salary is higher than their tenure parity projected salary, no adjustment is made, and as such no salaries are decreased as part of this adjustment. This methodology seeks to re-align employee salaries on the basis of years of overall tenure and can space out compressed employee salaries along the range based on this factor. The estimated cost for

this adjustment is **\$403,184.99** affecting a total of **140** employees. The costs of this one-time adjustment would be realized throughout the fiscal year.

Compa Ratio

This methodology preserves an employee's position relative to the midpoint of the pay range in the existing pay plan. For example, if an employee is currently 5% behind the midpoint in their pay range, compa-ratio would keep the employee 5% behind the midpoint when placing them into the new pay range. If an employee is ahead of the midpoint by 5%, compa ratio would keep them 5% ahead of midpoint. This option does not solve for wage compression but does preserve performance gains. This implementation option cost would be **\$1,082,718.31** and impacts **140** employees.

6.3 COMPENSATION AND CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION

Any organization's compensation and classification system will need periodic maintenance. The recommendations provided in this chapter were developed based on conditions at the time the study was conducted. Without proper upkeep of the system, the potential for recruitment and retention issues may increase as the compensation and classification system becomes dated and less competitive.

RECOMMENDATION 4: Conduct small-scale salary surveys as needed to assess the market competitiveness of hard-to-fill classifications and/or classifications with retention issues and make adjustments to pay grade assignments if necessary.

While it is unlikely that the City pay plan as a whole will need to be adjusted for several years, a small number of classifications' pay grades may need to be reassigned more frequently. If one or more classifications are exhibiting high turnover or are having difficulty with recruitment, the City should collect salary range data from peer organizations to determine whether an adjustment is needed for the pay grade of the classification(s).

RECOMMENDATION 5: Conduct a comprehensive classification and compensation study every three to five years.

While small-scale salary surveys can improve the market position of specific classifications, it is recommended that a full classification and compensation study be conducted every three to five years to preserve both internal and external equity for the City. Changes to classification and compensation do occur, and while the increments of change may seem minor, they can compound over time. A failure to react to these changes quickly has the potential to place the City in a poor position for recruiting and retaining quality employees.

While the previous two recommendations intend to maintain the competitiveness over time of the classification and compensation structure as a whole, it is also necessary to establish procedures for determining equitable pay practices for individual employees.

RECOMMENDATION 6: Revise policies and practices for moving employees' salaries through the pay plan, including procedures for determining salaries of newly hired employees and employees who have been promoted, demoted, or transferred to a different classification.

Evaluation and updating of current compensation policies is necessary as some existing policies were implemented when the City employed a step plan instead of an open range pay plan. The method of moving salaries through the pay plan and setting new salaries for new hires, promotions, demotions, and transfers depends largely on an organization's compensation philosophy. However, it is important for the City to have established guidelines for each of these situations, and that they are followed consistently for all employees. Common practices for progressing and establishing employee salaries are outlined below. The current policies may differ from the proposed policies outlined in this section so consideration should be given to modernizing existing policies to meet the demands of a growing City. Employment Policy should strive to find a balance between accountability and flexibility. The Commission should use their role to create policies that give staff the flexibility to achieve desired outcomes while simultaneously fostering a culture of accountability and operational excellence. City leadership should take action to achieve Commission approved goals and policies and be given the autonomy to recognize and reward higher performers and remove poor performers from the organization.

Salary Progression

As outlined above, Evergreen recommends City enact the second phase of implementing the new pay plan which would involve a one-time salary adjustment for employees to ensure they are placed in the proper percentile of their salary range. Evergreen is recommending Tenure Parity as the preferred implementation option to bring employees into their new, market competitive pay ranges while also solving instances of wage compression. While this major adjustment should be performed when the City has the financial resources to do so, the City should continue to adjust salaries annually when financially feasible. Based on the feedback from employees and City leadership, Evergreen recommends that the basis of salary adjustment in the future be done at three distinct levels.

- **Structural:** Adjustment to the ranges should be done annually and with the aim of adjusting for the changes in cost of living. Evergreen recommends the City tie the annual compensation structure movement to the local change in the Consumer-Price-Index (CPI). This annual adjustment will ensure the City's pay ranges do not rapidly fall out of line with that of its peers; however, when conducting the small-scale surveys referenced above, the City should also collect pay plan movement and anticipated movement from its peers to gauge if market movement is keeping pace with CPI movement.
- **Classification:** As a result of the market surveys, the City may identify classifications or job families that are experiencing considerable market movement and as a result, reassignment of the pay grades should be considered when this occurs. Alternatively, if the City identifies classifications that have become hard to recruit and retain, pay grade reassignment should also be considered to ensure the City is competitive for both recruiting new talent and retaining existing employees.



- Individual: To tie into the adjustment of the structure, Evergreen recommends the City adjust employee salaries annually for Cost-of-living adjustment (COLA). This adjustment would be done for all employees who receive a satisfactory performance evaluation, and the percentage adjustment would need to be at least 1.0 – 2.0 percent more than the movement of the compensation structure in any given years, in order to allow for employee progression into the range. Moreover, based on the feedback from employees and the City's desire to recruit and retain a high-quality workforce, Evergreen recommends the City grant additional adjustment to employees who receive above average performance evaluations. The City should exercise a differentiated percentage for high performers that met the financial constraints of the budget while still providing a meaningful incentive for high performance. This would continue to draw upon the current annual merit performance based rating system. Continued training of City leadership responsible for performing these annual reviews is critical to ensure consistency and linkage to Commission approved operational and service outcomes. Bottom line, a performance based annual review and adjustment is only effective is aligned with Commission approved operational and service goals. This linkage allows the Commission to focus on policy and employees to focus on day to day operations.

New Hires

A new employee's starting salary largely depends on the amount of education and experience the employee possesses beyond the minimum requirements for the job. Typically, an employee holding only the minimum education and experience requirements for a classification is hired at or near the classification's pay grade minimum. An upper limit to the percentage above the minimum that can be offered to a new employee with only the minimum requirements should be established, where approval is needed to offer a starting salary that is a higher percentage above minimum. Another threshold should be established as the maximum starting salary possible without approval for new employees with considerable experience and/or education above the requirements for the position. It is common for the midpoint to be used as the maximum starting salary for most classifications. Once the City has performed the initial implementation adjustment for current employee salaries, new employee starting salaries should take into consideration internal equity, meaning that new hires should be offered comparable salaries to existing employees in the classification with similar levels of education and experience. Another important consideration for a City of Cooper City's size is a the City policy of how outside experience will be valued when recruiting new employees. Evergreen recommends the City modernize the policy pertaining to experience gained outside of Cooper City by assigning a percentage value to the verified outside experience a potential new hire brings with them to the City. By valuing outside experience based on an established policy, it would allow the City to expand the pool of applicants when recruiting to fill open positions.

RECOMMENDATION 7: Evergreen recommends the City update its policy regarding promotions/demotions and transfers to align with its new compensation structure.

Evergreen recommends the City implement a minimum increase equal to the midpoint progression between the employee's current grade, and the employee's new grade. However, the employee's salary should always be increased to at least the minimum of the new salary



range. In the case of demotions, Evergreen recommends a minimum salary decrease equal to the midpoint progression between the employee's current grade, and the employee's new grade, except in cases where this percent decrease would reduce the employee's salary below the new range minimum. If the employee's salary exceeds the new range maximum after the pay decrease, the employee should be capped from receiving any salary adjustments until the pay moves upward to allow for increases.

Promotions/Demotions

When an employee is promoted to a new classification, it is important to have guidelines for calculating the employee's new salary that rewards the employee for their new responsibilities, moves the salary into the new pay grade, and ensures internal equity in the new classification. It is common for organizations to establish a minimum percentage salary increase that depends on the increase in pay grade as a result of the promotion. Regardless of the minimum percent increase, the employee's new salary should be within the new pay grade's range, and internal equity of salaries within the classification should be preserved.

Transfers

An employee transfer occurs when an employee is reassigned to a classification at the same pay grade as their current classification or when an employee's classification stays the same, but their department changes. In either of these cases, it is likely that no adjustment is necessary to the employee's salary. The only situation in which a salary adjustment would be needed for a transferred employee would be if their current salary is not aligned with the salaries of employees in the new classification or department. If that occurs, it may be necessary to adjust the salary of the employee or the incumbents of the classification to ensure salary equity within the new classification.

RECOMMENDATION 8: Evergreen recommends the City implement a critical classification program and compensate those classifications that qualify 10 percent above their current base rate of compensation.

Critical Classifications

The City's leadership team should assess all classifications each year to determine those that should be categorized as "critical" based on market data collected for that year and turnover. In the first year, it is recommended that the critical class supplement be up to 20 percent for those classifications with more than 30 percent turnover and/or a market rate percent difference of 20 percent or more (after accounting for the new salary range assignments). Furthermore, if adopted by the City, a critical class supplement could be increased to a larger percent of base pay. For example, if the City in the future experiences considerable competitive pressure in hiring candidates for a specific classification. Some of the pressure may relate to the pay ranges, but other factors such as the available supply of labor, compared to demand of experienced candidates may also be present. As a result, the base pay of the associated classification would be increased so long as the external market pressures remain prevalent.

6.4 SUMMARY

The City is undergoing a time of considerable change and should be commended for its desire and commitment to provide not only competitive and fair compensation for its employees but to help resolve some systemic compensation issues. set the standard for public sector employment in the region. Throughout this study, even while experiencing change in leadership during the study, the City project team and acting department directors were engaged and their collaboration was instrumental in delivering defensible recommendations and results.

The new pay plan places a higher priority on market competitiveness due to the current conditions and trends in the labor market but also includes key classification changes that will modernize operations. The recommendations in this report establish a new market competitive pay plan utilizing the proposed open range pay plan along with the tenure parity implementation option. These recommendations estab externally and internally equitable classification titles and pay grade assignments, and system administration practices that will provide the City with a responsive compensation and classification system for years to come. While the upkeep of this recommended system will require effort, the City will find that having a competitive compensation and classification system that encourages strong recruitment and employee retention is worth this commitment.

With the implementation of these Evergreen proposed changes, the City will move one step closer to reestablishing itself as the standard for public sector employment in the region.

