



CONSENT CALENDAR
May 20, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Paul Buddenhagen, City Manager

Submitted by: Monica Walker, Interim Director of Human Resources

Subject: Adopt a Resolution Establishing the Unrepresented Job Class Specification and Pay Scale of Fire Mechanic Lead

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution establishing the unrepresented job class specification and pay scale of Fire Mechanic Lead as outlined, with an hourly pay range of \$51.0771 - \$54.1740.

FISCAL IMPACT

The recommended pay range for the proposed classification represents a fiscal impact of \$106,240 - \$112,681 (\$194,749 - \$206,557 including full benefits) for one position. This cost is lower than the current annual cost of outsourcing large vehicle repairs to specialized vendors (approximately \$329,000 in 2023 and \$539,000 in 2024), plus the annual cost of 0.5 FTE Fire Captain II currently assigned to oversee the repairs (approximately \$170,000 annually).

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Establishing an independent Fire Apparatus Mechanic position for the Berkeley Fire Department presents a cost-effective solution to the department's growing vehicle maintenance expenses. The current job classifications of Mechanic and Lead Mechanic are used mainly by the Public Works Department for general maintenance of heavy vehicles, but does not include specific job duties and knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to maintain fire apparatuses.

BACKGROUND

In the absence of an in-house mechanic, the Fire Department has relied on specialized vendors for nearly all large vehicle repairs, resulting in outsourced costs of \$329,000 in 2023 and \$539,000 in 2024—a dramatic increase in expenditures. Additionally, the department has had to dedicate 0.5 FTE of a Fire Captain II, at an estimated annual cost of \$170,000, to oversee these repairs, including transporting vehicles to and from Sacramento. While an in-house Fire Apparatus Mechanic would not eliminate the need for external repairs entirely, it is expected to significantly reduce outsourcing costs, minimize operational disruptions, and allow fire personnel to focus on their primary emergency response duties. Over time, this investment would lead to substantial cost savings and improved fleet readiness, ensuring that fire apparatus remain in optimal condition with greater efficiency and reduced downtime.

The pay scale represents the same range as the Mechanic Lead in Public Works for internal equity, and

Establish the Job Class Specification and Pay Scale
of Fire Mechanic Lead

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the pay and minimum requirements are reflective of pay ranges of similar fire mechanic lead classifications in neighboring jurisdictions.

The new classification was approved by the Personnel Board at its meeting of April 7, 2025, by unanimous vote.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

There are no identifiable environmental impacts or opportunities associated with the subject of the report.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The new classification of Fire Mechanic Lead is being established to reduce outsourcing costs, minimize operational disruptions, and allow fire personnel to focus on their primary emergency response duties.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

Continue outsourcing large vehicle repairs to specialized vendors and utilizing 0.5 FTE Fire Captain II to oversee repair processes.

CONTACT PERSON

Monica Walker, Interim Director of Human Resources, (510) 981-6818.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution
Exhibit A: Fire Mechanic Lead – Proposed Job Class Specification and Pay Scale

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

ESTABLISH THE JOB CLASS SPECIFICATION AND PAY SCALE OF FIRE MECHANIC LEAD

WHEREAS, the Human Resources Department maintains the Classification and Compensation plan for the City of Berkeley; and

WHEREAS, job specifications are foundational components of the City's Classification and Compensation plan; and

WHEREAS, the Human Resources Department developed job specifications for the classification with an hourly salary range of \$51.0771 to \$54.1740 and an annual salary range of \$106,240 to \$112,681; and

WHEREAS, the job classification of Fire Mechanic Lead is established as an unrepresented classification;

WHEREAS, the Personnel Board recommended on April 7, 2025, to adopt the new job specifications and pay range for the Fire Mechanic Lead classification; and

WHEREAS, employees who work in the classification of Fire Mechanic Lead will be considered non-exempt under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the classification for Fire Mechanic Lead is established with a job specification and pay scale as shown in Exhibit A, effective May 20, 2025.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Fire Mechanic Lead classification has an hourly pay scale of \$51.0771 to \$54.1740 over three (3) steps:

Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
\$51.0771	\$52.6214	\$54.1740

Exhibit A:
Fire Mechanic Lead – Job Class Specifications and Pay Scale

Exhibit A: Job Class Specification

City of Berkeley
Fire Mechanic Lead

CLASS CODE
XXXX

SALARY
\$51.08 - \$54.17 Hourly
\$4,086.17 - \$4,333.92 Biweekly
\$8,853.36 - \$9,390.16 Monthly
\$106,240.37 - \$112,681.92 Annually

Definition

Under the general supervision of Fire Captain, Assistant Fire Chief or Deputy Fire Chief, the Fire Mechanic - Lead is responsible for performing advanced diagnostics, maintenance, and repair of all heavy fire apparatus within the Fire Department including ladder trucks, engines, and specialty units. Ensures compliance with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and other applicable standards; manages shop inventory and requisitions parts; may direct a small crew as a working lead; and provides technical guidance and training to other mechanics and fire personnel. Performs related work as assigned.

Class Characteristics

This is a lead position in which incumbents direct, coordinate and perform the work in an equipment shop on an assigned shift, provide technical assistance to staff in the servicing of a wide variety of heavy fire vehicles and equipment and assist in evaluating the work of assigned personnel.

Examples of Duties

The following list of duties describes the various types of work that may be performed and the level of technical complexity of the assignment(s) and is not intended to be an all-inclusive list.

1. Inspect, diagnose, repair and maintain all heavy fire apparatus components and equipment including diesel, gasoline and electric motors, fire pumps, relief valves, ball valves, primer pumps and power take-offs, electric and hydraulic systems, steering mechanisms, lights, computerized ignitions, pneumatic systems, fuel delivery systems, air brakes, suspension, transmissions, and air compressors.
2. Install, maintain, diagnose and repair mechanical and electrical systems including replacing inoperative parts, checking and adjusting brakes, changing oil and filters, installing batteries, tires, and glass.
3. Conducts acceptance and annual service tests of engines, pumps and related equipment.
4. Diagnose and perform routine maintenance on breathing air compressor(s) and cascade systems including conducting necessary air sampling.
5. Reads and interprets technical manuals, plumbing and electrical schematics.
6. Cleans and maintains work area in an orderly manner; maintains shop tools in safe and proper working conditions.

7. Uses welder and other shop equipment to fabricate metal parts/equipment and repair broken parts.
8. Requisitions parts, tools, equipment, and materials needed for repair work.
9. Answers emergency calls to repair equipment in the event of an emergency incident or in cases of breakdown or accident. May assist with technical aspects of reports on major accidents. Document and report all work utilizing the fire department and City computerized fleet management system.
10. Reviews vehicle and equipment needs of the Department; assists with drafting requirements and specifications formatted for the bidding and acquisition of vehicles and equipment. Corresponds and maintains liaison with equipment suppliers, inspects bids submitted, recommends acquisition, and ensures manufacturer's compliance.
11. Instructs others in proper equipment operation, maintenance and conducts training classes for other mechanics and fire personnel.
12. Schedules and directs the work of staff engaged in the overhaul, repair and maintenance of heavy fire apparatus.
13. Assists the Fire Captain, Assistant Fire Chief or Deputy Fire Chief with evaluation of employee performance of assigned personnel and instructs and provides for the training of staff in work methods, use of tools and equipment and relevant safety precautions.
14. Drives/operates a variety of fire department vehicles.
15. Operates a variety of standard office equipment such as a computer, copier or fax machine.
16. Perform related duties as assigned.

Knowledge and Abilities

Knowledge of:

1. Methods, techniques, and materials used in the maintenance and repair of fire apparatus and emergency vehicles.
2. Operation and maintenance of a wide variety of diagnostic tools and shop equipment.
3. NFPA standards related to fire apparatus maintenance and testing.
4. Technical schematics, diagnostic software, and computerized vehicle systems.
5. Preventative maintenance techniques for fire apparatus and emergency vehicles.
6. Welding and metal fabrication for vehicle components.
7. Safe work methods and safety regulations.

Skill in:

1. Independently diagnosing and repairing complex mechanical, hydraulic, pneumatic, and electrical issues.
2. Use of electronic diagnostic tools and software to analyze vehicle performance.

3. Training fire department personnel in apparatus operation, inspection, and maintenance.
4. Maintaining accurate maintenance logs and service records using fleet management software.
5. Interpreting technical schematics, electrical diagrams, and NFPA compliance documents.
6. Operating heavy shop equipment, including overhead cranes, hoists, and hydraulic presses.
7. Working effectively under emergency conditions and time constraints while ensuring safety.
8. Establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with those encountered in the course of the work.

Minimum Qualifications

At Time of Application:

1. Graduation from high school or equivalent.
2. Three years of experience maintaining and repairing heavy-duty vehicles, ideally including fire engines and aerial ladder trucks.
3. California Commercial Class B commercial driver's license, or Class C with a firefighter endorsement license with air brake and tank endorsements.

By Completion of Probation:

1. Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Certified Master Medium-Heavy Truck Technician.
2. Completion of specialized courses in fire apparatus maintenance and repair:
 - a. General:
 - i. Chassis Electrical - Understand the location and function of (non-multiplex) electrical systems and components used on Pierce® chassis.
 - ii. Command Zone™ Systems - Get detailed instruction on the Pierce Command Zone™ electrical systems including the new Command Zone III.
 - iii. Preventative Maintenance - Become an expert in preventive maintenance procedures required for fire apparatus based on NFPA and DOT Standards.
 - iv. TAK-4® Suspension Maintenance - Learn the basic design and principles of the TAK-4® Independent Front Suspension system, including proper maintenance and repair.
 - v. SRP/Frontal Protection - Get expert instruction on the installation, repair, and troubleshooting of the SRP/FIP system.
 - vi. Air Conditioning Systems - Get the basics on repairs, troubleshooting and maintenance needs of Pierce installed components.
 - vii. Chassis Diagnosis - Evaluate drivability issues, including how to do advanced troubleshooting, perform failure analysis, determine the causes of chassis component failures and learn how to repair and prevent issues properly.
 - viii. Air Brakes, ESC, ABS Troubleshooting - Learn basic air brake theory and proper repair and maintenance procedures on chassis air brake systems
 - b. Pierce Type I/III Engine:
 - i. California Fire Mechanics Academy: CFM115-Fire Pumps & Accessories or SFT Equivalent
 - ii. CAFS/Husky Maintenance - Learn the principles of operation, maintenance, and repair of all the Pierce Husky™ Foam Systems and the Hercules™ Compressed Air Foam Systems (CAFS).
 - iii. Pierce PUC™ Pump Maintenance - Learn the basic principles of operation, maintenance and complete disassembly of the REPTO driven water pump and gearbox.
 - c. Pierce Aerial Ladder Truck:

- i. Aerial Maintenance - Understand the proper repair and maintenance of Pierce aerial ladders and platforms.
- ii. Ascendant® Class Aerial Maintenance - Learn proper repair and maintenance of Ascendant® Class Aerials, including the aerial electrical and hydraulic systems.
- iii. Advanced Aerial Maintenance - Get detailed information about advanced repair and maintenance of Pierce aerial systems.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Tools & Equipment Used

Diagnostic tools, hammers, screwdrivers, pry bars, wrenches, pliers, ratchets, sockets, electrical meters, code readers, drills, welding equipment, hydraulic lifts, overhead cranes, fleet management software, computers, and phones.

Physical Requirements

Frequent walking, standing, sitting, kneeling, squatting, twisting, and bending at the waist. Ability to hear automotive sounds, read fine print, and view a computer monitor. Sufficient strength and stamina to lift and install parts weighing up to 80 pounds. Manual dexterity for detailed mechanical work and computer use.

Working Conditions

Work is performed indoors and outdoors with exposure to hot and cold environments. Noise level ranges from moderate to high. Potential exposure to hazardous materials and emergency conditions.

