

Title	Landowner Biodiversity Conservation Grant Program
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Policy Type

Council

Policy Purpose

To provide financial support and deliver environmental education to local landowners with the intent to provide assistance with conservation and enhancement of natural bushland and wetland areas on privately owned land.

Policy Statement

As a consequence of urbanisation, local bushland has become fragmented and is increasingly under threat from a variety of causes that contribute to its degradation.

Privately owned bushland is therefore an important resource, forming part of wildlife corridors and bushland linkages for the migration of birds and animals. It plays a vital role in maintaining both the diversity of species at the individual plant level as well as diversity within the gene pool.

In recognition of the importance of conserving natural bushland and wetland areas on privately owned land, the Council will provide up to a maximum of \$3,000 per lot to eligible landowners. Landowners are eligible to lodge an application for each round of funding provided previous grants have been acquitted for a maximum of three consecutive years. Landowners will not become eligible to apply for funding again until after a period of three years has elapsed.

(1) Conditions of Approval

Landowners need to complete an application form prior to the end of October and may be awarded a grant if they meet the eligible criteria.

(2) Grant Conditions

All successful applicants are required to:

1. Complete and sign a Voluntary Management Agreement and Conditions of Funding form
2. Complete a Statement by Supplier form. This will avoid withholding tax being deducted from the grant
3. Develop a Property Management Plan with the assistance of the City's environmental staff
4. Attend a minimum of one environmental management workshop hosted by the City
5. Submit a final Report acquittal form within 12 months of receiving the grant.

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(3) Allocation of Grants

Applications for grants will be evaluated and awarded:

1. In order of merit until the funding pool approved in the Council’s annual operating budget is exhausted.
2. In order of preference to properties with large remnant bushland or wetland areas that are of good biodiversity value. Smaller areas of bushland shall be considered if they are linked to adjoining properties or green corridors or if the conservation value of the area in question is extremely high.

(4) Acquittal of Grants

Grant recipients shall be required to complete and submit a final report acquittal form to the delegated officer within twelve months of receiving a grant, confirming that funds have been expended in accordance with the Voluntary Management Agreement and Conditions of Funding form.

(5) Supporting Documentation

1. Brochure
2. Procedure Manual
3. Application Form
4. Property Eligibility Checklist Form
5. Final Report Acquittal Form

Strategic Link:	Natural Area Management Strategy
Category	Environment & Sustainability
Lead Business Unit:	Sustainability and Environment
Public Consultation: (Yes or No)	No
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