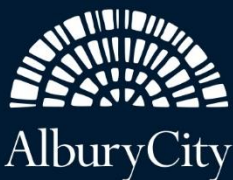


AlburyCity
Land Management
Incentive Program
Guidelines
(LMIP)



1. Background

Across New South Wales over 70% of biodiversity is located across the private land network and within Albury approximately two thirds of our Environmental Management (C3) zoned land is currently under private ownership. During the development of the Regional Natural Environment Strategy in 2020, the community asked Council to provide better support and work with private landowners to achieve on-ground environmental outcomes. The AlburyCity Land Management Incentive Program aims to encourage and incentivise residents to undertake on ground works that benefits local biodiversity.

The key objectives of the Land Management Incentive Program is to support on-ground actions that:

- a. protect, create, and/or enhance habitat for local threatened species such as Squirrel Gliders, Woodland Birds and Sloane's Froglet;**
- b. restore local threatened ecological communities;**
- c. protect important landscape features (e.g. creek lines, rocky outcrops, wetlands, dams, large old trees etc.); and**
- d. improve connectivity across the Albury landscape.**

This program is targeted at supporting projects located on privately owned land zoned: C2 – *Environmental Conservation* (formerly E2); C3 – *Environmental Management* (formerly E3); Category 2 (regulated) rural land; and properties that contain or are in proximity to important natural assets (eg. public reserves, wildlife corridors, rivers, creek lines, wetlands, roadside vegetation, large old trees etc.) (Appendix 1).

There will be one funding round per financial year with opening and closing dates listed on the AlburyCity website. Grants range from up to \$5,000 for individual landholders to \$25,000 for community groups or a collective of landholders (grants outside of this value will be considered if discussed and approved with council officers). Applicants would be expected to contribute funds either through contributions or in-kind labour.

2. Focus Areas

Several focus areas have been identified for the program to ensure on-ground works are prioritised in areas of need. Any applications outside of these focus areas may still be considered if the project aligns with the program's objectives and eligibility criteria. In order of priority, the key focus areas for the program include (Appendix 2):

1. Wirlinga Corridor;
2. Thurgoona;
3. Table Top;
4. Ettamogah;
5. Splitters Creek;
6. Hamilton Valley and Springdale Heights; and
7. Glenroy.

3. Eligibility

All applicants are encouraged to read the guidelines and discuss their proposal with the Environmental Lands Coordinator before starting their submission. Applicants must clearly demonstrate alignment to the program's objectives.

To be eligible for this program the applicant must:

- be a not-for-profit organisation, community group, group of landholders, an individual or an incorporated body;
- complete the project within the AlburyCity Local Government Area;
- clearly demonstrate alignment to the program's objectives and focus areas;
- be up to date with any Council grant reporting or acquittals;
- have no outstanding debts owed to Council;
- demonstrate the grant will be used for a purpose in the public interest primarily for the local community; and
- have an Australian bank account.

4. Eligible Projects

The following projects are eligible under this program:

- Revegetation activities (including direct seeding);
- Biodiversity or exclusion fencing;
- Threatened species management;
- Weed control programs;
- Pasture Management;
- Environmental education programs; and
- Other – new technologies or alternative projects not listed that can be shown to have significant environmental benefits.

4.1 Revegetation Projects

Types of revegetation projects that may be considered include (but are not restricted to):

- a. plantings within, adjacent to or near remnant vegetation or previous planting sites;
- b. planting to connect two or more remnant or revegetation patches;
- c. establishment of new plantings to create stepping-stones across property/landscape;
- d. planting of new paddock trees or plants surrounding existing paddock trees to protect soil from compaction and to enhance biodiversity values (would need to include stock-proof fencing); and
- e. planting of native shelterbelts comprising a complex mix of native trees and shrubs between paddocks to improve local biodiversity and connectivity, reduce impacts from wind, and provide shade for stock.

Please note the following:

- Revegetation projects must utilise plants local to the Albury region (eg. South West Slopes Revegetation Guide).
- Demonstration of project site considerations, preparation and ongoing maintenance should be included in the application.
- Revegetation sites must exclude stock to ensure success of plantings. Stock should be excluded for up to 5 years and only used strategically to manage fuel loads or weed biomass after that period.
- The preferred minimum width of revegetation projects is 20 metres.
- Joint projects between adjoining neighbours will be considered (eg. 10-20 metres either side of boundary fence line).

4.2 Biodiversity or Exclusion Fencing

Implementation of fencing to protect native vegetation, key habitat features and biodiversity values. This may include (but is not restricted to):

- a. Fencing of remnant vegetation to reduce impacts from grazing and promote natural regeneration;
- b. Fencing of large old trees to avoid compaction or browsing from stock (eg. Paddock trees);
- c. Fencing of creek lines, farm dams or wetlands to protect biodiversity values; and
- d. Fencing of rocky outcrops.

Please note the following:

- Any fencing must be stock-proof and wildlife friendly (ie. not barbed wire).
- The landholder will be responsible for maintaining all new and existing fences, enclosing the project site, in stock-proof condition.
- Minimum standards for exclusion fencing should include:
 - no barbed wire;
 - 6-7 lines of high tensile plain wire or a combination of plain and hinge joint;
 - minimum star pickets spacing of five metres; and
 - fences to include box end assemblies.

4.3 Threatened Species Management

To enhance threatened species populations and habitats found within the Albury LGA. This may include (but is not restricted to):

- a. placement of suitable nest boxes for specific threatened species – or target species (eg. Squirrel Gliders, Turquoise Parrots or Microbats);
- b. planting of specific plant species that is critical to the ecology of specified animal species;
- c. planting of rare or threatened flora species;
- d. targeted monitoring or surveys for a specific species to develop a greater understanding of a specific species across the property and landscape; and

- e. works to improve wetlands for Sloane’s Froglet (eg. altering dam outlet height to increase habitat for frogs or planting of suitable native vegetation).

4.4 Weed Control Programs

To control weeds within remnant vegetation or revegetation sites to enhance or to assist native regeneration on site. This might include (but is not restricted to):

- a. Control of priority weeds. Application needs to include details of key priority weed species and general area and locations of weeds.
- b. Control of environmental weeds. Application needs to include details of key priority weed species and general area and locations of weeds.

4.5 Pasture Management Programs

To promote the protection, and enhancement of native grasslands. This may include (but is not restricted to):

- a. perennial exotic grass control, eg. phalaris or paspalum control to encourage native grasses or native vegetation regeneration.

4.6 Environmental Education Programs

To promote the development and running of conservation programs directed at private landowners, organisations, or community groups. This may include (but is not restricted to):

- a. cultural heritage programs or works on land managed by the Local Aboriginal Land Council;
- b. field days focused on highlighting successful environmental projects on private land (eg. revegetation, creek line management, exclusion fencing projects);
- c. native plant giveaways targeted in focus areas; and
- d. nest box giveaways targeted in focus areas.

4.7 Other

Any proposals that demonstrate practical and achievable solutions to environmental issues and/or have positive environmental outcomes to the Albury community will be considered.

5. Approximate Timelines

Key Milestones	Key Dates
Applications open	November
Applications close	January
Assessment period	January/February
Outcome notifications	March
Payments Agreement and Initial Payments	4 weeks post-notification

Acquittal and reporting	60 days after project completion
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6. Available Funding

A recurring fund of \$100,000 is available for each financial year. Projects will not be funded retrospectively. Grants range from up to \$5,000 for individual landholders to \$25,000 for community groups or a collective of landholders (grants outside of this value may be considered if discussed and approved with council officers). Applicants would be expected to contribute funds either through contributions or in-kind labour.

7. Administration

The program will be administered by Council’s Environmental Lands Coordinator. The Smarty Grants Software package will be utilised for the application, expression of interest and acquittal reporting procedures. Throughout the Four-Year Delivery Program, AlburyCity will investigate partnerships with government agencies and organisations to help improve the coverage and uptake of program across the Albury LGA.

8. Assessment Process

Eligible applications will be assessed by a panel. Applications will be evaluated against the eligibility criteria and assessment criteria, which are weighted according to the project idea, capacity to carry out the project, location of project, environmental outcomes, and community participation/benefit (see below). Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified by letter/email.

Assessment Criteria

Assessment Criteria	Weighting
Project scope and design	30%
Project location and zoning	20%
Environmental outcomes	30%
Community participation and/or community benefit	20%

- Scope – Council is looking for well-considered and well-articulated projects that provide adequate detail regarding the works and how they will benefit local species/habitat/ecological communities.
- Location and zoning – Projects should be located on land zoned as Environmental Management/Conservation/Living or Category 2 rural land, or located close to existing natural assets. Projects within the focus areas of the Wirlinga Corridor, Thurgoona, Ettamogah, Splitters Creek, Hamilton Valley and Table Top will be prioritised (Appendix 1 and 2).
- Environmental Outcomes – Projects should demonstrate how works or programs will benefit local biodiversity. eg. creating or protecting habitat for a particular species or group of species, creating stepping-stones for woodland bird species, protecting remnant vegetation, increasing

foraging habitat for Squirrel Gliders, enhancing farm dams for Sloane's Froglet & waterbirds or educating locals about the importance of private land conservation.

- Community Benefits – Projects should involve some form of community participation/involvement or provide measurable benefits to local biodiversity and/or provide habitat for local threatened species.

9. Site Checks & Monitoring

To ensure projects are completed during the specific funding round, a Council officer will keep in contact with successful participants. Projects will be inspected either at key milestone stages or at the completion of the project. Projects considered to be high risk (high monetary value or complex project) may be monitored more regularly to ensure works have been completed satisfactorily. All inspections will be completed at a time that is mutually agreed upon.

Monitoring of project sites after the completion of the project is important as it helps ensure we can monitor the success of the project, improve methods, and learn from completed projects. AlburyCity encourages and will work with participants to establish photo monitoring points and other monitoring procedures after the project is completed.

10. Funding Agreement and Acquittal

Successful applicants will be required to complete a funding agreement. Agreements will set out any conditions specific to the funding and are completed to ensure commitment to the project and program.

Applicants will also be required to submit an acquittal within 60 days of the completion of their project, unless otherwise stated. The participant will need to include the provision of invoices, photos, or other documentation to prove works have been completed.

11. General Conditions

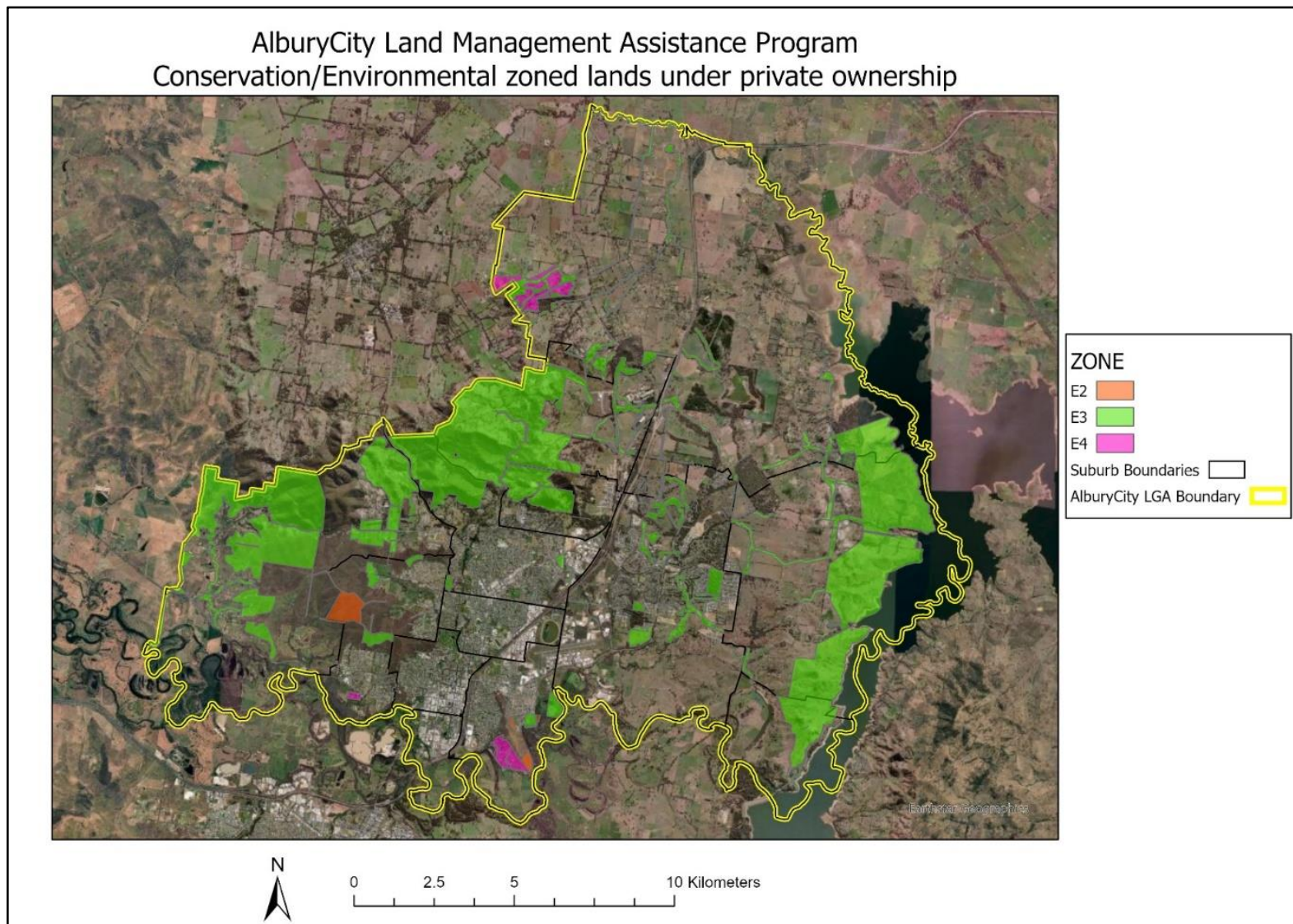
Conditions:

- AlburyCity reserves the right to make changes to the Land Management Incentive Program at any time, including (but not limited to) the available budget, the application opening and closing dates, and the eligible projects.
- Successful applicants will be required to complete a funding agreement with AlburyCity.
- The applicant understands that this LMIP funding is intended purely to assist with project delivery and that the responsibility for project delivery and long-term project maintenance rests with the applicant/landowner.
- In-kind labour will be assessed at \$40 per hour and must be undertaken as part of upcoming works. In-kind support can include the provision of materials, running of workshops, project management, physical labour and monitoring activities.
- All funding provided shall be used specifically for the purpose and activities set out in the 'letter of success' that will be forwarded to every successful project applicant.
- If it becomes apparent that the project cannot be achieved, the applicant must inform Council's Environmental Lands Coordinator or Environment Team as soon as possible. The applicant may be required to repay the grant to Council if the project is not delivered within the specified time

- schedule, or the completed project differs from the project detailed in the Funding Agreement.
- The grant may be revoked at any time for unsatisfactory work, failure to meet project completion and reporting requirements or for providing false or misleading information.
 - If the project requires entry onto another person's land, prior permission must be obtained.
 - All persons and contractors employed to apply agricultural chemicals must be licensed and qualified in accordance with appropriate legislation (or be under direct supervision of a permitted user). The use of agricultural chemicals must be in strict accordance with the product label and the Material Safety Data Sheet for that specific chemical.
 - Past recipients are eligible to apply for funding, however depending on the number of applications received, priority may be given to new applicants.
 - Applicants are required to provide quotes, approximate costings and invoices for all aspects of the project.
 - The applicant agrees to release Albury City Council from any claim or claims arising from the agreed works.

Appendix 1.

AlburyCity Land Management Assistance Program
Conservation/Environmental zoned lands under private ownership



Appendix 2.

AlburyCity Land Management Assistance Program - Key Focus Areas

