

7.2.4 Bushland reserve and natural area maintenance schedule of rates contract

Responsible GM: Peter Benazic
Author: Lisa Kuriata

Recommendation(s)

That Council

- Endorse the establishment of natural reserve area maintenance panel for an initial period of three (3) years with an option to extend for an additional three (3) years, for a potential of six (6) years.
- The tenders submitted by Naturelinks Landscape Management Pty Ltd, SEEDS Bushland Restoration Pty Ltd, Native Habitat and Acacia Environmental Management Pty Ltd for bushland reserve and natural area maintenance be accepted on to the contractor panel.
- The remaining tenderers to be advised accordingly.

Attachments

1. CONFIDENTIAL - RF T 000039 Bushland Reserves and Natural Area Maintenance - Tender Evaluation Report for signing - [7.2.4.1 - 9 pages]

Executive Summary

Cardinia Shire Council is responsible for the management of 82 bushland reserves totalling an area of approximately 870 hectares and approximately 87kms of roadsides of high to very high conservation value.

The appointment of a contractor panel will assist in streamlining the annual natural reserves maintenance program and daily operational works. The contractor panel will allow for improved planning and response time to undertake required works and realise ongoing, long-term biodiversity outcomes.

A public tender was called on 27 April 2024 for bushland reserve and natural area maintenance RFT000039. Fourteen submissions were received.

The evaluation panel agrees that Naturelinks Landscape Management Pty Ltd, SEEDS Bushland Restoration Pty Ltd, Native Habitat and Acacia Environmental Management Pty Ltd be considered for the natural reserve area maintenance panel.

Background

Cardinia Shire Council is responsible for the management of 82 bushland reserve areas, which total an area of approximately 870 hectares. Cardinia Shire Council is also responsible for the management of approximately 1,556 km of local road network, which includes approximately 64 roadsides of high to very high conservation value, spanning around 87 km length.

A public tender was called on 27 April 2024 for bushland reserve and natural area maintenance RFT000039. Fourteen submissions were received.

Activities detailed in the tender included, but not limited to:

- works relating to the maintenance and enhancement of Council owned and managed bushland reserves and natural areas, including significant roadside vegetation.
- weed control using various techniques
- revegetation projects

- preparation of management plans and surveys
- supply and operation of plant and equipment
- necessary safety precautions to undertake bushland reserve and natural area maintenance, and conservation works as part of the natural reserves maintenance program.
- implementation of traffic management plans where required for working on roadsides.

An assessment panel was established with representative from Council's procurement team, natural reserves team and risk, health and safety. All members of the evaluation panel completed and signed the required conflict of interest forms, with no conflicts identified.

A scored evaluation consisting of the following criteria was undertaken to ensure the viability of the submissions and to ensure that value for money results were achieved:

- compliance with the specifications, capability, relevant experience and past performance, customer service, locality to Cardinia Shire, best practice methods ensuring long term ecologically effective outcomes (weighted), and
- financial viability, risk and insurance, compliance to conditions of contract, conflict of interest (not weighted).

Each recommended tenderer was approved by the risk team for OH&S documentation and insurances. A creditor check was also completed on each tender, each returning an acceptable financial result.

Policy Implications

This work is consistent with Council's *Liveability Plan*, *Climate Change Adaptation Strategy*, *Biolink Plan*, *Biodiversity Conservation Strategy*, *Weed Management Strategy* and *Sustainable Environment Policy*.

Relevance to Council Plan

2.1 We support the creation of liveable spaces and places

2.1.2 Plan and maintain safe, inclusive and connected open spaces, places and active travel routes.

3.1 We value our natural assets and support our biodiversity to thrive

3.1.3 Work with community to improve and manage our natural assets, biodiversity and cultural heritage.

5.1 We practise responsible leadership

5.1.4 Maximise value for our community through efficient service delivery, innovation, strategic partnerships and advocacy.

Climate Emergency Consideration

Climate change is anticipated to further alter our natural environment and favour weed and pest animal populations. This service will respond to and improve Council's environmental

assets while mitigating the impacts of climate change by supporting a healthy and diverse natural environment.

Consultation/Communication

This report has been drafted in consultation with staff from:

- Environment and Heritage Unit
- Finance and procurement
- Risk, Health and Safety

Financial and Resource Implications

There will be no impact on the operating or capital works budget. All works to be engaged would be within existing budget allocations, the 2024/25 financial year budget is approximately \$450,000 including confirmed and anticipated external funding.

Contractors from the panel will be engaged on a as needs basis within the allocated budget. Future budgets will be approved as per councils annual budget process. The contractor panel will allow for improved planning, increase in response time to undertaking required works and ongoing, long-term outcomes. It will see a reduction in administrative tasks required to enable day to day operational work to be undertaken.

Conclusion

The development of a contractor panel will streamline the annual natural reserves maintenance program and daily operational works. The contractor panel will allow for improved planning, improved response time to undertake required works and ongoing, long-term biodiversity outcomes.

It is recommended that the tenders submitted by Naturelinks Landscape Management Pty Ltd, SEEDS Bushland Restoration Pty Ltd, Native Habitat and Acacia Environmental Management Pty Ltd be accepted for bushland reserve and natural area maintenance contractor panel.