CM-AS-06 Roadside Fire Mitigation – Management Procedure

Relevant Council Policy	Relevant Delegation
C-AS-02 Street Tree and Streetscape Policy	

Purpose
To provide a framework for the mitigation of fire risks and hazards on the roadside through appropriate management practices to reduce fuel loads and provide safe means of escape in emergency situations.

Application
This Procedure applies to street verges under the care, control and management of the City.

Glossary and Definitions
Cultivated Street Tree – A street tree that has been selectively planted.

Debris – Accumulation of vegetative materials such as leaves, nuts and bark.

Development application – Relates to sub-division, crossovers and / or building.

Fire Mitigation – A combination of mechanical removal, chemical treatment and the burning of living and dead vegetative material to reduce fuel loads.

Naturally-Occurring Street Tree – A street tree that meets the following criteria:

- An endemic species in that locality.
- Appears to have grown randomly and not part of a planting program.
- No record of significant human intervention.

Pruning – Living and dead material above and below ground.

Significant tree – Any tree that has heritage, cultural, social or environmental value as recorded within the Citys street tree register.

Streetscape – The combination of hard and soft landscaping of the verge.

Street tree – Any tree that has more than 50% of the base located within a verge/road reserve.

Tree – Any plant over 1.5m in height, normally of a single stem.

Verge – the section of road reserve between private property and the road kerb or edge of the road pavement.

Detail

Item	City Responsibility
Street Tree Preservation	Please refer to the "Street Tree Preservation - Management Procedure".
Matters that need to be addressed	The verge provides a range of benefits including: • Aesthetic value to the community. • Habitat for flora and fauna. • Wildlife corridors. • A barrier to traffic. • Wind and heat reduction. These positive benefits need to be balanced against the need to minimise risk to life and property from fire. It is acknowledged that the majority of the City is considered a fire risk area.
Prioritisation of Fire Mitigation on verges	The following factors will be considered when prioritising fire mitigation works on the verge. • Traffic volumes and thoroughfares. • Provision of buffer zones adjacent to the carriageway. • Whether properties have an alternative means of escape. • Environmental values of the roadside. • Local environmental conditions such as topography, vegetation type and structure. • Distance to high priority areas such as evacuation centres and emergency assets (dams and water tanks). • Distance to major community infrastructure.
Hierarchy of Control	The range of treatments are varied and have different benefits and costs. In general terms the selection of a fire mitigation treatment should be in the following order, however this will depend on the local conditions: 1. Mechanical removal of vegetation and fuel litter– includes hand removal of vegetation, grading of fire-breaks, mechanical removal of litter and debris, pruning and brush cutting. 2. Chemical treatments – limits the growth and spread of vegetation. Most useful for the maintenance of fire breaks and ongoing treatment of recently burnt areas. 3. Burning – using cool or hot fires as appropriate to burn in a controlled manner.
Hierarchy of Treatment	The methodology of treatment below is to balance the competing demands of maintaining environmental values while managing fuel loads. Fire mitigation methods should occur in the following order: 1. The removal or maintenance of weed species. 2. Removal or maintenance of dead materials and debris. 3. The removal or maintenance of non-endemic species.

	4. The removal or maintenance of middle layer vegetation.	
Fire Mitigation	**City Responsibility**	**Community Involvement**
	The City is responsible for fire mitigation works on the verge. The City will develop and implement an ongoing program of fire mitigation works across the City. The City will encourage and assist the community to minimise fire risks. Where appropriate, the City will undertake fuel reduction on the verge in conjunction with work on adjacent reserves.	Residents are encouraged to undertake mechanical removal and chemical treatment of their verges to assist in the protection of their properties. This should be undertaken with the approval of the City to ensure that environmental and aesthetic values are not compromised. Residents will NOT be permitted to undertake burns on the verge.
Community Assistance with Fire Mitigation Actions	The City's Fire Mitigation activities are undertaken with the assistance of a number of community and volunteer groups. This includes the Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade and the volunteer Fire and Rescue Service.	