



Monaro councils confirm support for the Monaro Rail Trail

On 20th February 2025 Snowy Monaro Regional Council resolved to reinstate investigations into the feasibility and potential future construction of the Monaro Rail Trail (MRT) Project. This decision has been welcomed by trail supporters throughout the region in recognition of the economic, recreation and social benefits the trail will bring to local communities.

Speaking to the motion Councillor Tanya Higgins said *"This is about the future of the region. We should be moving forward rather than stagnating while other councils are being visionary, future oriented and community centric."*

The NSW Government, in 2022, released a framework to guide development of rail trail projects such as the MRT which will run on the 213km disused rail corridor from Queanbeyan to Bombala. The framework ensures community views are considered, all environmental impacts can be managed and projects are financially viable.

Frank Bakker, Chair of the Monaro Rail Trail community group said much of this work had already been completed and relevant reports are now with SMRC for review. *"Council has already made an important start towards establishing the rail trail with construction of the first 4 to 5km section of the trail from Bombala commencing in the near future, thanks to funding from the Federal Government"*.

Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council also supports the Monaro Rail Trail and at the Council meeting of 12 February 2025 approved a motion for council to apply for \$5M grant funding from the NSW Government Regional Economic Development and Community Investment Program. If successful, this will see the first 21km segment of the trail being constructed from Queanbeyan to near Royalla. This rail corridor trail, when linked to the Riverside and Ellerton Drive pathways, will create a 25km loop trail around Queanbeyan with recreation and commuting options for residents of Queanbeyan and the new suburbs in Jerrabomberra. It will also be a drawcard for ACT cyclists, bringing them across the border and into Queanbeyan's cafés.

QPRC Councillor John Preston commented after the meeting *"I look forward to seeing it progress and eventually enjoying a ride on the new trail."*

Steve Whan MP for Monaro and a long-time supporter of the MRT also gave his support saying *"These trails are designed for families and people of all ability levels who can ride in small sections or set off for a multi-day trip. It will be an excellent boost to tourism, putting another feather in our caps as one of the state's greatest playgrounds, which is why I support this project."*

Other NSW councils with rail trails have not been disappointed. In December 2024 Tweed River Council, on the NSW North Coast, won a major tourism award for its Northern Rivers Rail Trail and Mayor Cherry said *"This award celebrates not just a fantastic visitor experience but also the Rail Trail's vital contribution to our region's social and economic future."* *"The Trail will be a cherished asset for locals and a drawcard for visitors, helping to sustain and grow the vibrant communities it connects."*

For more information go to:

<https://www.monarorailtrail.com.au> or <https://www.facebook.com/MonaroRailTrail/>

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