



### SMRC candidate responses

#### John Castellari – candidate Group Greens

“The Monaro Rail Trail is a significant project which can bring more tourism to our region. It melds a healthy outdoor activity that is accessible to every level and age of cyclist, with the bonus of creating business opportunities along the trail route. It can introduce tourists to areas of our LGA that currently receive little visitation, thus stimulating small local economies in townships that currently are merely driven through to get to the coast. I fully support its development; as with every project of this type it will require the community and council to work together to identify funding opportunities to ensure its success.”

#### Narelle Davis- independent group A

“I am a very strong supporter of the Monaro Rail Trail. I was involved in building the first NSW rail trail and I have first-hand experience in the process of planning, building and working with communities. Rail trails are a proven major tourist attraction to regional communities, allowing families, young and older people to enjoy safe, active and environmentally sustainable day trips or holiday activity. This project will benefit most of the communities in the Monaro region, economically and providing opportunities for community growth.”

#### William Healy- independent

“Personally, I have no objections to MRT and support the concept.”

#### Tricia Hopkins – independent Group A

“I support the initiative to promote well-being, regional and economic development in a tourism form that will promote the uniqueness of this region.”

#### Katrina Higgins -lead candidate Group Labor

“Snowy Monaro Labor supports the Monaro Rail Trail. How wonderful would it be for recreational users of the region to enjoy the best of our beautiful environment, especially at the moment with it being so green!

Having the railway line area maintained will benefit us all, promote healthy lifestyles and create more opportunities for local businesses and tourism operators. This is a great way to boost the area after the rough years we have had to endure.

When we get Team Labor onto the Snowy Monaro Regional Council, Labor councillors will support the Rail Trail.”

#### Karlee Johnson– independent Group A

“I support the rail trail, it will be such an asset to the smaller villages, while being a fun recreational tourist attraction. “

## MRT meets the council candidates Nov 2021



### **Olivier Kapetanakos - independent**

"This MRT has to the potential to be a unique signature tourism product for the Monaro - perfect to compliment the Alpine adventure that is our Snowy Mountains. The MRT committee is so strong and the plan so well detailed that this project is near assured of success".

### **John Last- independent**

"I have supported the Rail Trail right from the outset. I will continue to support the Rail Trail and help promote it.

I consider the Rail Trail as one the most important activities carried out in this area. You and your committee are to be congratulated for the excellent work you have carried out and will no doubt, continue to carry out"

### **Craig Miller – independent**

"I am a very strong supporter of the Monaro Rail Trail (MRT)

Having ridden rail trails in New Zealand and Europe I believe they are a wonderful way of immersing yourself in a landscape. I think they are also a great source of recreation and contribute to thriving communities.

Happy to do anything I can to facilitate this project."

### **Brian Old – independent**

"I have ridden the Tumbarumba Rail Trail and am really impressed with the amazing benefits to the community and the care taken to protect adjacent farms. Therefore, I am 100% convinced that the Monaro Rail Trail will be a great asset for the numerous small communities directly involved and it will complement the economic and employment opportunities arising from cycling across the whole Snowy Monaro".

### **Vickie Pollard - independent**

"As a Candidate in the upcoming Local Council elections, I strongly support a recreational trail along the disused rail line from Queanbeyan to Bombala. I have been a supporter for many years and I believe that the proposed Monaro Rail Trail would bring the following benefits to our towns and villages:

- It would provide a predictable year-long boost for the local businesses.
- It would provide health and social benefits for the local communities.
- It would take tourists into villages and towns, boost hospitality business and give opportunities for new businesses.
- It would enhance the state, national and international reputation of the towns and villages."

## MRT meets the council candidates Nov 2021



### **John Rooney -independent**

"The MRT will breathe new life into all the towns and villages along the line, pumping millions of dollars every year into cafes, B&Bs and farmers markets from Michelago to Bombala. I want Council to work with MRT Inc to find state and federal grants to construct the trail and also to develop innovative ways for the tourism dollars generated, to maintain the trail at minimal cost to ratepayers. Heritage railway stations could be repurposed for tourism businesses saving them for posterity"

### **Daniel Shirvington – independent Group A**

"I fully support the proposal for the Monaro Rail Trail. After consulting with members of the broader community, but particularly Bombala, there is evidence of major public support. It will see a great deal of tourist dollars spent in the region and give locals a great recreational activity which is great for physical and mental health and well-being.

### **Bob Stewart – independent**

"I am fully supportive of the Monaro Rail Trail since there is no other project which will bring such great benefits to so many communities on the Monaro. The professional Committee of MRT Inc deserve the strong support of all SMRC and Q-PRC Councillors as well as Governments. I will continue to be passionate in Council to make this terrific project a reality without further delay".

### **Luke Williamson - independent**

"I'm always interested in ideas that could grow and diversify our wider region's economy. As a councillor I'll be most interested in projects that do this. Obviously, there are still hurdles in respect to NSW Government permissions, development of a detailed business case, biosecurity assurance, protecting neighbour's amenity and access to funding. I'm therefore pleased to hear that MRT Inc has established a close working relationship with Council staff.

I look forward to working with MRT Inc once I join the council."



### QPRC candidate responses

#### **Margot Sasche - lead candidate Group C Team Sasche**

"I am a very strong supporter of the Monaro Rail Trail. It is a great idea. Rail trails are real economic drivers for regional communities and would be a real recreational plus for our community. Through the Jerrabomberra Resident's Association, I have been a strong advocate for the MRT and will continue to be so if elected to Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council "

#### **Katrina Willis - lead candidate Group Greens**

"The Greens in QPRC are broadly supportive of rail trails along disused rail lines which have little prospect of being used for rail transport in the future, as is the case with the line in question. We appreciate the contribution rail trails can bring to small population centres by attracting visitors as well as providing new recreational opportunities for local residents.

We are happy to provide in-principal support for the Monaro Rail Trail project, noting that QPRC has provided a \$50,000 grant to assist development of the project plan. We would need additional information on the legal implications of QPRC taking a lease over a section of the line and the likely annual maintenance costs before we could fully commit to supporting the project."

#### **Bryce Wilson – lead candidate Group Labor**

'We have had a track record of supporting the rail trail and we will continue that strong support on QPRC'

#### **Louise Burton – lead candidate Group Liberals**

"The Monaro Rail Trail (MRT) has the potential to be the tourism hero piece of QPRC and Snowy Monaro council areas. It's unique in that it has two major population/regional centres along its route (Queanbeyan to Cooma and on to Bombala). It also has the advantage of having support from both councils who see the economic benefits of the project to the wider community.

The Liberal Party's Group ticket will continue this support on QPRC. In fact, it was the Liberal Party's own Councillor, Mark Schweikert, that lobbied for, argued and secured funding for the MRT feasibility study in QPRC's budget.

We support the MRT and thank the committee for their professionalism, drive and collegial approach to the project and look forward to seeing it come to fruition."

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