

THE MISSION

REGIONAL RAIL WORKING GROUP ROCKAWAY SUBCOMMITTEE

The *Rockaway Subcommittee* of the *Regional Rail Working Group* advocates the establishment of speedier rail service between Midtown Manhattan and the Rockaway Peninsula. The *Rockaway Subcommittee* believes that reactivating of the Rockaway Beach Line; currently inactive in part should become a vital link in the region's future. It would greatly serve passengers traveling to and from southern and central Queens as well as to and from the Aqueduct Racino and JFK Airport.

The Regional Rail Working Group is a consortium of transit advocacy organizations whose goal is to improve mobility by promoting the conversion of the Tri-State Region's commuter rail lines into a regional rail system, with fast and frequent service with affordable and integrated fares. A major component of this plan would be the more efficient operation of commuter rail service. This would be accomplished through operating commuter trains between destinations in Long Island, Queens and New Jersey via Penn Station.

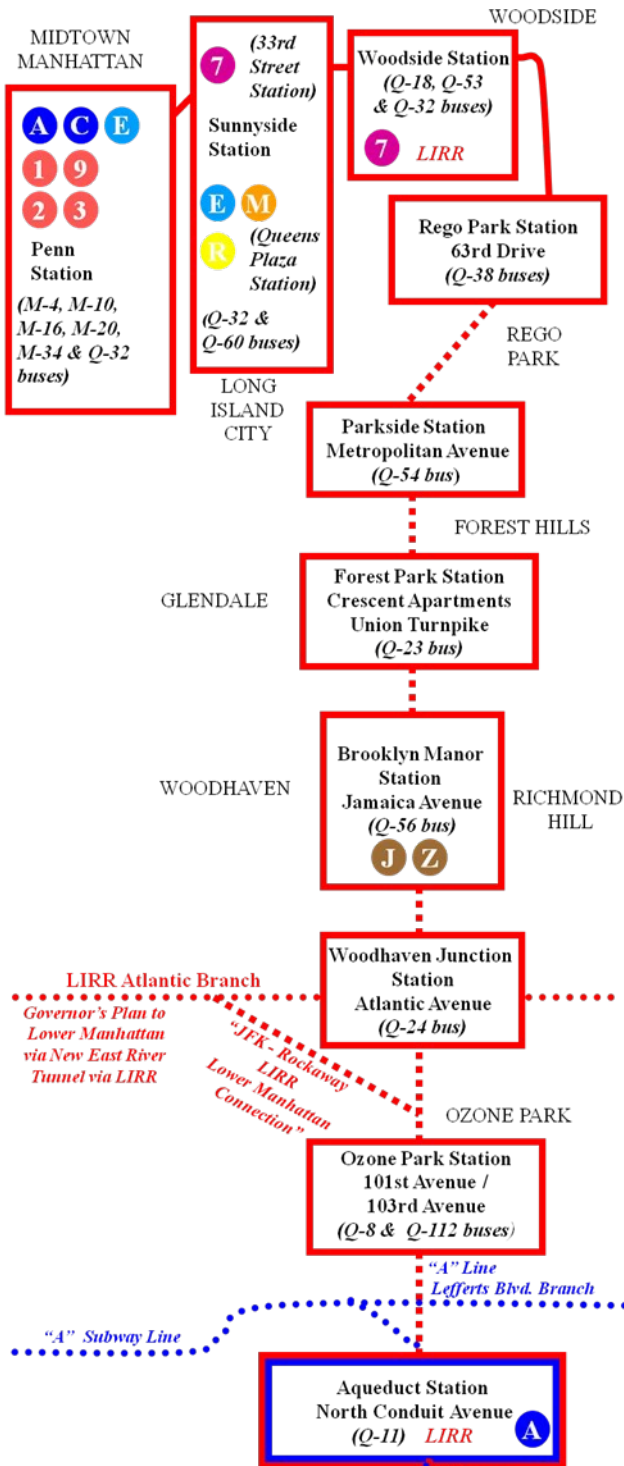
THE PROPOSAL

- In southern Queens, a key component of the plan would be a one-seat ride from JFK Airport and the Aqueduct Racetrack/Casino to Midtown Manhattan. Restoring the disused LIRR Rockaway Cut-Off in Central Queens would permit high speed airport rail service, connect areas of Queens not now well-served by rail transit and offer speedier travel between the Rockaways and Midtown Manhattan.
- A 4.2 mile segment of rail right of way is available. Only one bridge must be restored to make this segment operable. A short track connection with the AirTrain light rail system would be made north of the Howard Beach Station. A small fleet of specially designed rail cars, that could operate on LIRR tracks and also use the AirTrain tracks, would be needed. At Aqueduct Race Track (North Conduit Ave.), a cross platform transfer would make it easier for "A" train riders to transfer to this new rail service to Midtown Manhattan plus permit airport riders to switch to the "A" train for service to downtown Brooklyn and lower Manhattan.
- The generous restored right-of-way could also accommodate hiking paths and bikeways, and add much to the needed open space along the rail corridor. Special provision for noise barriers would be an important feature. In consultation with affected communities several intermediate stations could be re-opened and adjacent transit friendly development encouraged.

THE BENEFITS

- **REDUCED TRAVEL TIME:** Travel time between south Queens and Midtown, Manhattan would be reduced by providing more direct and faster service along the reactivated Rockaway Beach Right-Of-Way under any of the alternatives described. Travel time to Midtown Manhattan would be cut in half.
- **ENHANCED PROPERTY VALUES:** Property values would increase because communities along the Rockaway ROW would be in closer proximity to speedy train service to Manhattan.
- **BOOST ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:** *Improved* access could spark economic development for all businesses located adjacent to the Rockaway Beach Right- Of- Way.
- **NEIGHBORHOOD BEAUTIFICATION:** The abandoned right-of way that currently gathers garbage and weeds would be properly landscaped and sound proofed.
- **INTEGRATED & AFFORDABLE FARES:** Integrated and affordable regional fare structure which would be later incorporated into the new Smart Card Technology.

**REVITALIZATION OF THE L.I.R.R.
ROCKAWAY BEACH LINE**



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