

BENEFITS OF REACTIVATING THE NORTH ROCKAWAY LINE

1) **Ends Economic Isolation of Southern Queens** - The area is underserved by mass transit with the principal subway lines, J & A, running to Downtown Manhattan. Downtown Manhattan is a declining job market as it becomes more and more residential. Job growth is taking place in Midtown and the Far West Side where access today is difficult and time consuming.

Reactivating the Rockaway line will provide direct access to Midtown & cut travel time to 23 minutes.

2) **Spurs Economic Growth in Southern Queens** - With cheaper rents, less congestion and tax breaks, many businesses would like to locate in the outer boroughs. They don't do so because the isolation of the area repels many potential employees.

Southern Queens is extremely suitable for smaller businesses in software manufacturing, education and health services. The foreclosed houses would be an ideal location for many of them. In addition, building a new rail line would raise property values significantly especially near the route.

Reactivating the north Rockaway line will make access so easy both from Midtown Manhattan and within Queens itself that this impediment to local job creation will be removed.

3) **Increases Intra Queens Mobility** - The Great Green Barrier (Forest Park + the Cemeteries) blocks mobility between northern and southern Queens. Woodhaven Blvd. is the only major artery to cut through the barrier and is overloaded with traffic making travel between the 2 parts of the borough very problematic.

Combined with Limited Stop Bus Service at Rego Park, the north Rockaway line will provide quick and direct access to the Queens Malls, the Main St. Flushing Commercial district, Queens College, LaGuardia Airport and the M & R trains at 63rd Drive.

4) **Reduces Traffic on Woodhaven Blvd.** - Traffic on Woodhaven Blvd. is a nightmare especially during rush hours with jams and gridlock a frequent occurrence. The probability of traffic spilling over into local streets is extremely high.

Reactivating the north Rockaway line will provide an attractive mass transit alternative far superior and more efficient than any Select Bus Service.

Railway vs. Greenway

- The Railway will serve and benefit a far larger number of people than the Greenway.
- The Railway will be active 24 hours, 365 days a year while the Greenway is daytime & seasonal.
- The bicycle path component can be built on the sides of the Railway if there is sufficient demand.
- The Greenway is not the High Line.

THE PROPOSAL

The North Rockaway line would be restored from a point north of Aqueduct to Rego Park where 3 Limited Stop bus lines would be inaugurated:

- 1) to Queens College and the Main Street, Flushing commercial district.
- 2) to Citifield on game days and special events.
- 3) to LaGuardia Airport.

Stations: A preliminary list includes:

- 1) Atlantic Avenue: would provide a transfer to the LIRR & the new Barclay Sports Arena and to numerous subway lines: #2, #3, #4, #5; B & Q; D, N, R. [Formerly Woodhaven Junction]
- 2) Jamaica Avenue: transfer to the J and Z trains. [Formerly Brooklyn Manor]
- 3) Metropolitan Avenue [Formerly Parkside]
- 4) Rego Park: 5 minutes away from the Queens Mall, M & R subway lines. It would also provide a transfer to the new Limited Stop Buses and LIRR trains to Nassau and Suffolk.

Transportation Mode: The north Rockaway line can be reactivated in one of two ways:

- 1) *LIRR Railroad Option*: A branch of the LIRR would be extended from Rego Park to Howard Beach offering a transfer point to residents of the Rockaways.
 - 2) *Subway Option*: A new subway line would be created running from both branches in the Rockaways and terminating at a joint subway/LIRR station at Rego Park for an easy transfer.
- Deciding on which option now is premature. The final decision would depend on cost, technical issues and popular preference.

It's critical that those favoring reactivation of the North Rockaway line organize a citizens' campaign to tell the political world that they have had enough of mediocre transit in southern Queens.

Rockaway Beach Branch - LIRR Howard Beach Alignment

