

# QueensLink

*Transit, Economic and Environmental Justice*

August 4, 2022

The Honorable Kathy Hochul  
Governor of New York State  
NYS Capitol Building  
Albany, NY 12224

The Honorable Eric Adams  
Mayor of the City of New York  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Governor Hochul & Mayor Adams,

We, the undersigned lawmakers, write in support of conducting an Environmental Impact Study for QueensLink. This proposed extension of the NYC Subway M Train from Rego Park to the Rockaways would run along a city-owned, 3.5-mile right-of-way that the LIRR Rockaway Beach Branch once used. The QueensLink is to South and Central Queens what the IBX is proposed to be for Brooklyn and Western Queens. Both projects would reuse existing rail assets to improve mass transit for neighborhoods that desperately need it, while simultaneously reducing carbon emissions.

Some of the many potential benefits of the QueensLink include:

- **New transit connections** that reduce commuting time by up to an hour a day, allowing for faster access to education, employment, and recreation opportunities.
- **Reduced traffic** on Woodhaven Blvd. and the Van Wyck Expressway, curtailing greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants.
- **Transit equity** for the underserved communities of Glendale, Woodhaven, Richmond Hill, Howard Beach, Broad Channel, and the Rockaways. The latter endure some of the longest commuting times in the country.
- **Faster, car-free access to ResortsWorld Casino/Aqueduct Racetrack, JFK Airport, and Queens' Beaches** from Midtown Manhattan and other parts of Queens.
- **A boost to business districts** along Metropolitan Ave., Jamaica Ave., 101st Ave., Atlantic Ave., Liberty Ave., Cross Bay Blvd., Queens Blvd., and in the Rockaways.
- **Returning the G train to Forest Hills** once capacity is increased along the Queens Boulevard Line (QBL). Increasing capacity along the QBL will be possible when the M is diverted south at Rego Park, instead of ending at Forest Hills.
- **Faster, more reliable travel** between Queens neighborhoods via one-train access.
- **Up to 33 acres of space for parks, trails or newly created farmer's markets** alongside and underneath the tracks.

In 2019, the MTA released its Rockaway Beach Branch Sketch Assessment. This study determined that subway reactivation is feasible and estimated it would serve nearly 50,000 riders a day. This approximation does not include the millions of travelers who could utilize QueensLink for access to

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attractions in south Queens, such as Resorts World or the Rockaways, or for shopping at the malls along Queens Boulevard. As described in the title, the MTA’s report is only a “sketch,” and many of the assumptions require further study. While the MTA estimated the project would cost \$8 billion, an independent transportation consultant (TEMS) determined it would cost far less – about \$3.5 billion.

QueensLink is an investment that could pay for itself in economic return in less than a decade while serving New York City for generations. An EIS would provide greater detail on QueensLink’s potential economic and environmental impact, as well as provide solutions to preserve the quality of life for people and businesses along the right-of-way. With the new federal infrastructure bill dedicating \$10 billion for transportation projects in NYS, we want to move as fast as possible to understand how best to allocate these funds.

An EIS for QueensLink will put it on a similar track to the IBX, another study-worthy initiative. Both projects are currently part of the [MTA 2025-2044 20-Year Needs Analysis](#) that will inform their 2025 – 2029 Capital Plan.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the elected officials and community boards who have affixed their signatures on the following pages.



**Rick Horan**

Executive Director

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## ATTACHMENTS:



[Rockaway Beach Branch Sketch Assessment](#)  
[MTA – SYSTRA Engineering](#)  
[September, 2018, Released October 2019](#)



[QueensLink Corridor Analysis](#)  
[Transportation Economics and Management Systems, Inc. \(TEMS\)](#)  
[June 2021](#)

**United States Congress, 5<sup>th</sup> District**

[Gregory Meeks](#)

*Note: House ethics rules required a separate letter from the Congressman*

**New York City Public Advocate**



Jumaane Williams

**New York City Comptroller**



Brad Lander

**New York State Senate, District 10**




James Sanders, Jr.

**New York State Senate, District 13**



Jessica Ramos

**New York State Senate, District 15**



Joseph Addabbo, Jr.

**New York State Senate, District 18**



Julia Salazar

**New York State Senate, District 59**



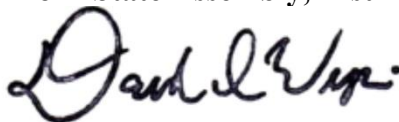
Kristen Gonzalez

**New York State Assembly, District 23**



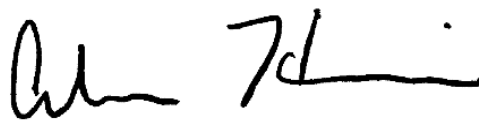
Stacey Pheffer Amato

**New York State Assembly, District 24**



David Weprin

**New York State Assembly, District 28**



Andrew Hevesi

**New York State Assembly, District 31**



Khaleel Anderson

**New York State Assembly, District 34**



Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas

**New York State Assembly, District 38**



Jenifer Rajkumar

**Queens Borough President**



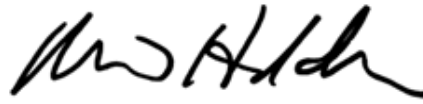
Donovan Richards

**New York City Council, District 27**



Nantasha Williams

**New York City Council, District 30**



Robert Holden

**New York City Council, District 31**

Majority Whip and Chair of Transportation and Infrastructure Committee



Selvena Brooks-Powers

**New York City Council, District 32**



Joann Ariola

**Community Board 6**



Heather Dimitriadis, Chairperson, Frank Gulluscio, District Manager

**Community Board 14**



Dolores Orr, Chairperson



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**QueensLink** is a 3.5-mile subway connection that links the A line to the Rockaways in the south to the M line on Queens Blvd. in the north. It also provides for up to 33 of the 47-acre right-of-way for use by parks and trails or whatever the local community deems most important. Learn more at [www.QueensLink.org](http://www.QueensLink.org)

**The QueensLink Team:** Miriam Bensman, Rick Horan, Jonathan Lazo, Andrew Lynch, Joe Page, Mike Scala, Paul Trust

**QueensRail Corporation** is a 501(c) 3 Not-for-Profit organized in 2015 to advocate for QueensLink