



AmeriStarRail

Transportation Innovation

December 17, 2021

Hon. Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State
Executive Chamber
New York State Capital Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Hochul,

AmeriStarRail (ASR) has developed a private sector initiative to improve Amtrak's Northeast Corridor and Empire Corridor services with expanded high speed, higher frequency, high performance service as detailed on our website www.AmeriStarRail.com.

Improving Northeast Corridor connections to airports in the Northeast is an important strategy to growing Amtrak ridership. For this reason, AmeriStarRail has been studying solutions to bring rail access to LaGuardia Airport (LGA).

In conjunction with James Corner Field Operations, landscape architects and urban designers with headquarters in Manhattan and Foit-Albert Associates, an engineering firm with an office in Queens, we are pleased to propose an innovative solution to extend rail service to LaGuardia Airport and dramatically increase the number of transit trips to LGA and JFK for airport workers and air passengers from Manhattan and the New York region.

AmeriStarRail's AirTrain LGA/JFK system proposal can start to be implemented immediately and completed in three phases:

Phase 1 - AirTrain LaGuardia Express Trains from Manhattan in Spring 2022:

Operating within the available track capacity of the N route, dedicated AirTrain LaGuardia trains can provide express service from City Hall to Astoria - Ditmars Blvd. From there, AirTrain Shuttle Buses can provide nonstop service to each LaGuardia Terminal. Phase 1 uses existing trains, tracks, stations and buses.

Phase 2 - Build (i) AirTrain LaGuardia from the N/W Astoria - Ditmars Blvd. station to LGA/ East Elmhurst, (ii) a new neighborhood station (*Louis Armstrong - East Elmhurst*), (iii) a new Amtrak/Metro North station (*New York Astoria Exchange Station*) overhead of the Astoria AirTrain station on the Hell Gate Bridge approach and (iv) the AirTrain SkyTrail linear park:

The new AirTrain LaGuardia, using the same train technology as AirTrain JFK, will run on newly built elevated tracks above 31st Street and 19th Avenue in Queens to serve all LGA terminals and a new neighborhood station: ***Louis Armstrong - East Elmhurst*** at Ditmars Blvd. and Astoria Blvd. In addition, a new station complex, ***Astoria Exchange Station***, (the first new intercity railroad station in New York since 1913) will serve NYCT trains, all Amtrak Northeast Corridor trains and Metro North Penn Station Access trains to provide rail access to AirTrain LaGuardia from Southern Connecticut, Westchester County and the Bronx and a nonstop connection to Penn Station. Residents of Queens will benefit from service at the new Amtrak/Metro North and AirTrain stations and the construction of the AirTrain SkyTrail linear park above the AirTrain tracks. Elevators will provide trail access for hikers, runners, bikes, strollers and wheelchairs.

Phase 3 - Extend AirTrain LaGuardia over the Van Wyck Expressway to connect with the existing AirTrain JFK at Jamaica:

The AirTrain connection at the new ***Astoria Exchange Station***, will provide Amtrak/Metro North passengers with rail service directly to JFK Airport. All Long Island Rail Road passengers will also

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have rail service to LaGuardia. The New York region will also have rail service to Citi Field and Mets games. Queens neighborhoods along the route will have transit benefits from three new AirTrain stations to be built in Phase 3 at **Mets - Willets Point, Jewel Avenue and Briarwood**. The entire community will also be able to enjoy the recreational benefits of the extension of the AirTrain SkyTrail to Jamaica above the AirTrain tracks. In Phase 3 airlines will have the flexibility to arrange connections for passengers and employees between LaGuardia domestic flights and international flights at JFK via AirTrain LaGuardia/JFK.

AmeriStarRail has devised our AirTrain LGA/JFK network in phases as a system solution to provide world-class rail transit access for the New York region to the world-class airports of LaGuardia and JFK International.

The attached AmeriStarRail AirTrain LGA/JFK maps illustrates how each phase can be developed and implemented to create the full AirTrain LGA/JFK system with the new Amtrak/Metro North/AirTrain/NYCT **Astoria Exchange Station**, the AirTrain SkyTrail for communities along the route and the other new stations contemplated as part of the AmeriStarRail AirTrain LGA/JFK solution. The costs and completion dates of each phase are subject to design and engineering evaluation.

ASR has begun discussions with the Ditmars Blvd. Block Association and other concerned groups to detail how the AmeriStarRail AirTrain LGA/JFK solution will reduce car traffic and increase transit connectivity to both airports for workers and air passengers. We understand that neighborhood participation and support is key to the success of this proposal.

These AirTrain system solutions are the result of significant time, effort and resources and are the intellectual property of AmeriStarRail. ASR, James Corner Field Operations and Foit-Albert Associates would be technical advisors for the MTA and the Port Authority in connection with the development and completion of the AmeriStarRail AirTrain LGA/JFK solution on terms to be discussed and agreed.

This letter is simply an introduction to the AmeriStarRail AirTrain LGA/JFK solution. We recognize that this proposal contemplates a complex, forward-thinking infrastructure project that will take time to analyze and consider. In that regard, we are available to discuss it in greater detail with you and your staff, the MTA and the Port Authority. We look forward to hearing from you and working with all stakeholders to implement this project.

Sincerely,



Scott R. Spencer
Chief Operating Officer

Cc:

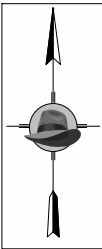
Rick Cotton, Port Authority NY/NJ
Raymond Hessinger, P.E., NYSDOT
Janno Lieber, Metropolitan Transportation Authority
Ditmars Blvd. Block Association and other concerned groups

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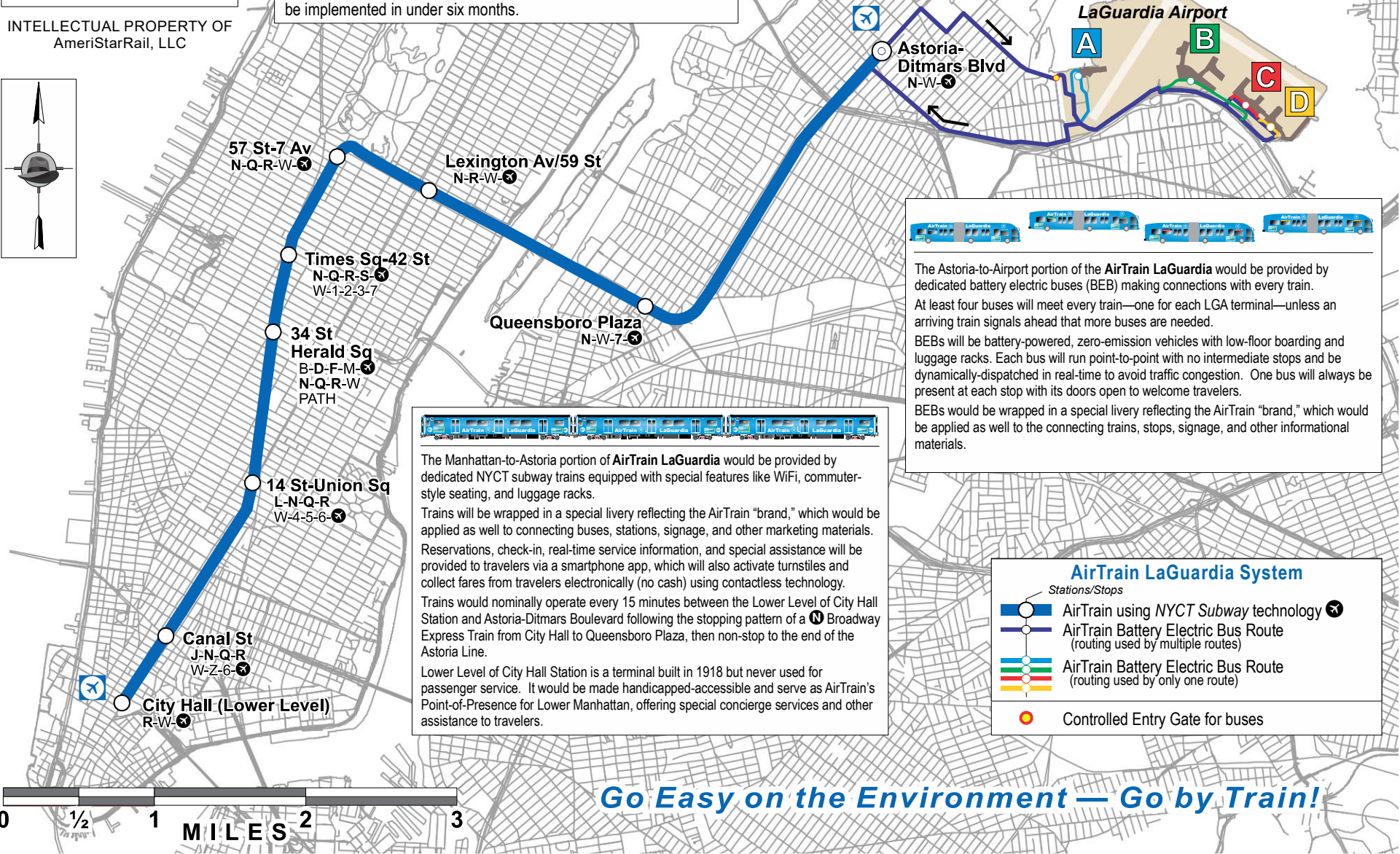
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The *NEW* AirTrain LaGuardia Phase One

In PHASE ONE, **AirTrain LaGuardia** consists of a fully-integrated combination of premium subway and electric bus services providing direct access between Downtown and Midtown Manhattan to LaGuardia Airport.

Dedicated battery electric buses, synchronized to train arrivals and departures, link Astoria with the Airport (one bus for each terminal). PHASE ONE uses existing trains, tracks, stations, and buses. It could be implemented in under six months.



The Manhattan-to-Astoria portion of **AirTrain LaGuardia** would be provided by dedicated NYCT subway trains equipped with special features like WiFi, commuter-style seating, and luggage racks. Trains will be wrapped in a special livery reflecting the AirTrain "brand," which would be applied as well to connecting buses, stations, signage, and other marketing materials. Reservations, check-in, real-time service information, and special assistance will be provided to travelers via a smartphone app, which will also activate turnstiles and collect fares from travelers electronically (no cash) using contactless technology. Trains would nominally operate every 15 minutes between the Lower Level of City Hall Station and Astoria-Ditmars Boulevard following the stopping pattern of a **N** Broadway Express Train from City Hall to Queensboro Plaza, then non-stop to the end of the Astoria Line. Lower Level of City Hall Station is a terminal built in 1918 but never used for passenger service. It would be made handicapped-accessible and serve as AirTrain's Point-of-Presence for Lower Manhattan, offering special concierge services and other assistance to travelers.



The Astoria-to-Airport portion of the **AirTrain LaGuardia** would be provided by dedicated battery electric buses (BEB) making connections with every train. At least four buses will meet every train—one for each LGA terminal—unless an arriving train signals ahead that more buses are needed. BEBs will be battery-powered, zero-emission vehicles with low-floor boarding and luggage racks. Each bus will run point-to-point with no intermediate stops and be dynamically-dispatched in real-time to avoid traffic congestion. One bus will always be present at each stop with its doors open to welcome travelers. BEBs would be wrapped in a special livery reflecting the AirTrain "brand," which would be applied as well to the connecting trains, stops, signage, and other informational materials.

AirTrain LaGuardia System

Stations/Stops

- AirTrain using NYCT Subway technology
- AirTrain Battery Electric Bus Route (routing used by multiple routes)
- AirTrain Battery Electric Bus Route (routing used by only one route)
- Controlled Entry Gate for buses

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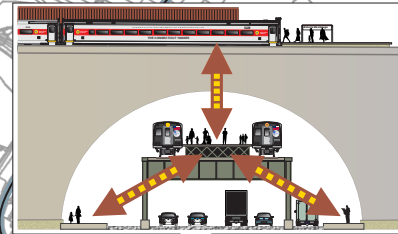
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The *NEW* AirTrain LaGuardia Phase Two

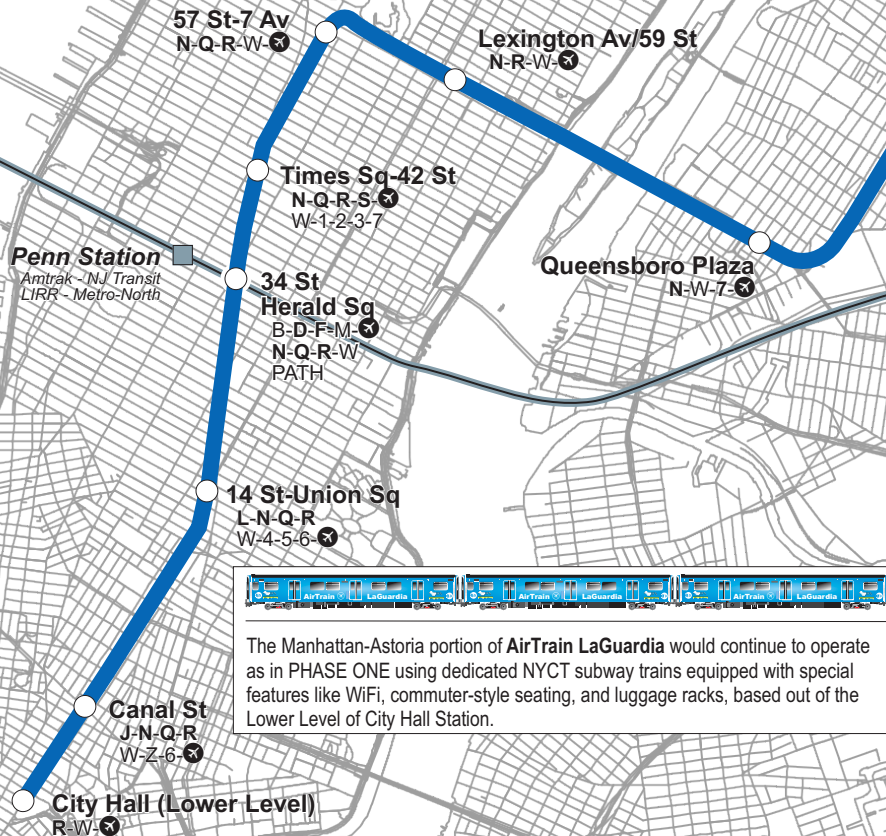
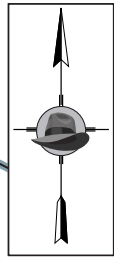
PHASE TWO improves **AirTrain LaGuardia** by replacing the shuttle buses between Astoria and the Airport with trains using the same technology as the AirTrain JFK.

PHASE TWO expands the reach of rail by adding a new exchange station over Astoria on the Hell Gate Bridge approach, opening up LGA to Amtrak and Metro-North travelers on the new Penn Station Access Line from the Bronx, Westchester County, Southern Connecticut, and stations along the Northeast Corridor.

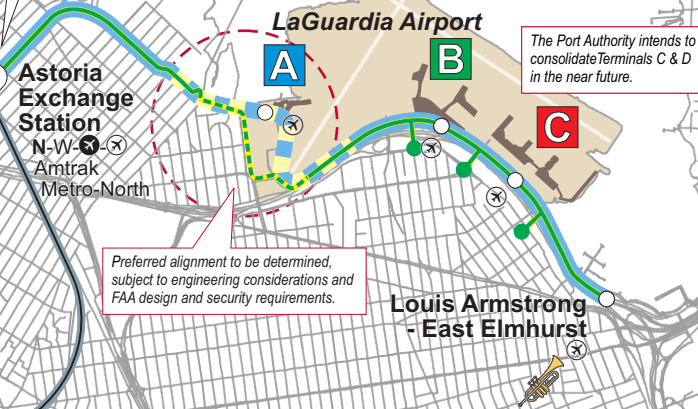
PHASE TWO also adds the new AirTrain SkyTrail linear park atop the elevated AirTrain linking Astoria, the Airport, East Elmhurst, and the Greater Queens bike trail network.



For over a century, trains of the Pennsylvania and New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroads (and their successors) have passed over the streets of Astoria and Astoria-Ditmars Boulevard Station with no connection to the neighborhoods. That would change with the **Astoria Exchange Station**, which not only opens up LaGuardia Airport to Amtrak and Metro-North patrons, but also opens those services to the residents of Queens.



The Manhattan-Astoria portion of **AirTrain LaGuardia** would continue to operate as in PHASE ONE using dedicated NYCT subway trains equipped with special features like WiFi, commuter-style seating, and luggage racks, based out of the Lower Level of City Hall Station.



Preferred alignment to be determined, subject to engineering considerations and FAA design and security requirements.



The Astoria-LGA Airport portion of the **AirTrain LaGuardia** would be provided by Advanced Rapid Transit (ART) trains compatible with AirTrain JFK technology. AirTrain ART trains connect all three LaGuardia Airport terminals with AirTrain NYCT Subway trains to/from Manhattan via a same-platform transfer at the transformed Astoria Exchange Station. AirTrain ART trains extend one stop east of LGA to East Elmhurst to provide that community with its own connection to the Airport, Amtrak, and the City as a whole.

AirTrain LaGuardia System

- Stations**
- AirTrain using NYCT Subway technology
 - AirTrain using AirTrain JFK technology (Elevated)
 - AirTrain using AirTrain JFK technology (TBD*)
 - AirTrain SkyTrail (atop AirTrain)
 - AirTrain SkyTrail (TBD*)
- * Alignment (e.g., underground, elevated, surface) to be determined
- Amtrak Northeast Corridor
 - Louis Armstrong House Museum



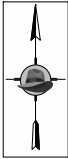
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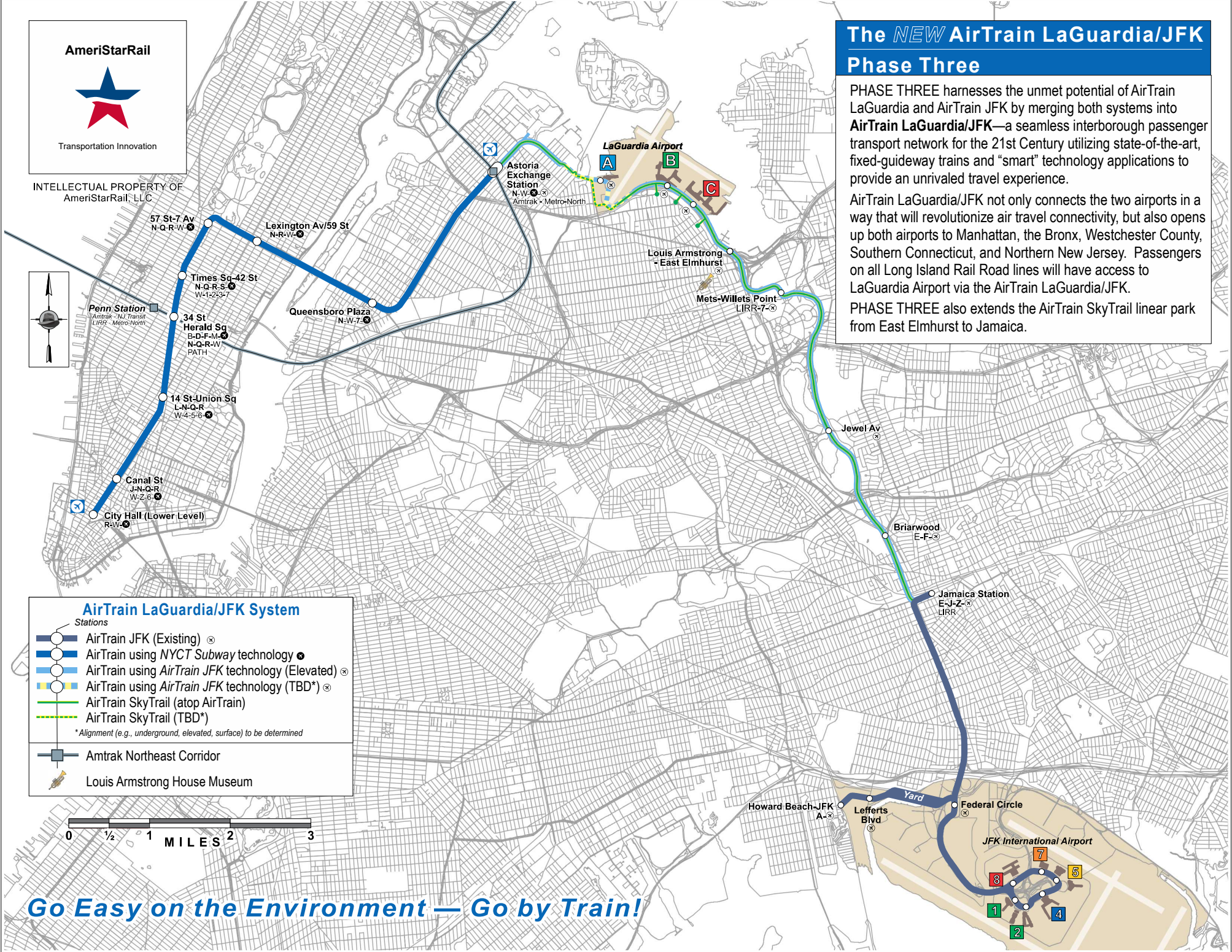


The *NEW* AirTrain LaGuardia/JFK Phase Three

PHASE THREE harnesses the unmet potential of AirTrain LaGuardia and AirTrain JFK by merging both systems into **AirTrain LaGuardia/JFK**—a seamless interborough passenger transport network for the 21st Century utilizing state-of-the-art, fixed-guideway trains and “smart” technology applications to provide an unrivaled travel experience.

AirTrain LaGuardia/JFK not only connects the two airports in a way that will revolutionize air travel connectivity, but also opens up both airports to Manhattan, the Bronx, Westchester County, Southern Connecticut, and Northern New Jersey. Passengers on all Long Island Rail Road lines will have access to LaGuardia Airport via the AirTrain LaGuardia/JFK.

PHASE THREE also extends the AirTrain SkyTrail linear park from East Elmhurst to Jamaica.



AirTrain LaGuardia/JFK System

Stations

- AirTrain JFK (Existing) Ⓢ
- AirTrain using NYCT Subway technology ●
- AirTrain using AirTrain JFK technology (Elevated) Ⓢ
- AirTrain using AirTrain JFK technology (TBD*) Ⓢ
- AirTrain SkyTrail (atop AirTrain)
- AirTrain SkyTrail (TBD*)

* Alignment (e.g., underground, elevated, surface) to be determined

Amtrak Northeast Corridor

Louis Armstrong House Museum



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