

EDITORIALS

AIRTRAIN ON A ROLL

Tell the doubters that the results are in and the AirTrain is an unqualified success. The AirTrain that once looked futuristic takes riders to and from John F. Kennedy International Airport. According to a report released recently by the Port Authority, nearly 4.4 million passengers have climbed aboard since the train began operation four years ago.

That's a staggering achievement for a transit system that has yet to be completed. At present the AirTrain picks up passengers in Jamaica and Howard Beach and delivers them to the various terminals at JFK International. A similar monorail run by the Port Authority takes passengers to Newark Liberty International Airport.

When it is completed the AirTrain will take passengers from Lower Manhattan to the airport and back. When that happens, we expect that ridership will more than double. The service will be faster and considerably cheaper than taking a taxi or limo to the airport. The end result will be a major reduction in traffic on the highways connecting to the airport. Queens residents will enjoy cleaner air and fewer traffic jams. (The taxi and limo drivers may be less than enthusiastic.)

Armed with the news of this success, we hope the Port Authority, city and state officials will move forward quickly with plans to complete the AirTrain link to Manhattan. This will ensure that Kennedy will remain one of the most important airports in the world far into the future and will assist the city in meeting its goals of reducing pollution.