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Press Release

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IMMEDIATE

Governor Cuomo Announces Parsons Brinckerhoff Will Lead Preliminary Engineering and Design Process for LaGuardia AirTrain

Parsons Brinckerhoff Will Develop Plan for Up to Two AirTrain Stations at New LaGuardia; Port Authority and MTA to Work Together to Build New Station Complex with Easy Transfer Between LIRR, 7-line Subway, and AirTrain

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey selected Parsons Brinckerhoff Inc. to conduct preliminary engineering and other planning work for a new AirTrain connection to LaGuardia Airport. The firm's work will take a major step forward in advancing the LaGuardia AirTrain project – which will create a much-needed rail link to the airport. LaGuardia is currently the only major East Coast airport without rail access. By 2030, the number of passengers at LaGuardia is expected to increase by more than 6 million annually and the AirTrain is essential to accommodate that growth. Parsons Brinckerhoff will lead the preliminary planning work for three different components of the project:

- Construction of up to two new AirTrain stations at the new terminal buildings at the airport
- Construction of an AirTrain station at Willets Point
- Construction related to the "right-of-way" for the train from the airport to Willets Point

"The new AirTrain will improve passenger experience, reduce traffic congestion and serve as a key part of the modernization and transformation of LaGuardia into a world-class airport," Governor Cuomo said. "LaGuardia Airport is an essential part of New York's economy and transportation network, and by providing additional transit options we will support new economic opportunities and growth throughout the region."

The LaGuardia AirTrain will serve a high-tech three-station complex at Willets Point. The station complex will create a seamless transfer for passengers between completely new LIRR and -line subway stations to be built over the next five years at Willets Point and the new AirTrain stop.

Parsons Brinckerhoff's mandate is to develop plans and to engineer the easiest possible transfer of MTA passengers with luggage to and from the AirTrain. The LaGuardia AirTrain link with the LIRR will provide a guaranteed 30-minute ride to the airport from Midtown Manhattan's two rail hubs – Grand Central and Penn Stations – as well as access to commuters coming from Long Island.

Port Authority Executive Director Pat Foye said, "LaGuardia Airport is the only major airport in the region without direct rail transit access. With passenger demand expected to reach 34 million annually at LaGuardia by 2030, providing mass transit access to the airport is fundamental to transforming it into a world-class facility that supports future growth, while reducing roadway congestion and resulting emissions."

Parsons Brinckerhoff will analyze and assess alignment alternatives, conduct a geotechnical review, create a conceptual design for both the train right-of-way and the stations, and develop cost estimates for the project. As part of the planning work, the firm also will conduct a detailed ridership analysis, analyze public-private partnerships and other options to identify the most advantageous financing plan for the AirTrain, as well as evaluate expanded parking and centralized car rental operations at a new Willets Point station complex.

Reliable and efficient rail service to and from the airport is critical to manage on-site airport parking, improve drop off and pick up activities at the terminal frontages and reduce congestion on and off the airport, including on the Grand Central Parkway – the main artery to and from the airport – and nearby neighborhood streets.