

# Frequently Asked Questions



## Project Overview and Background

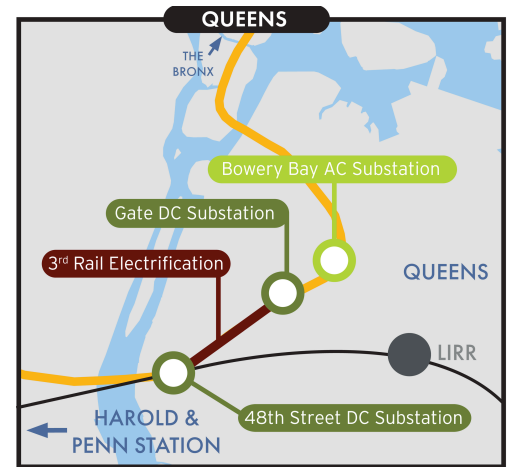
### Q1: What is the Metro-North Penn Station Access Project?

**A:** The Metro-North Penn Station Access Project (PSA) is a critical transit equity project that will significantly improve mobility for residents and workers in the East Bronx by building four new ADA-accessible stations in the Bronx and creating a new service from Metro-North's New Haven Line to Penn Station, utilizing Amtrak's existing Hell Gate Line. It will bring Amtrak's Hell Gate Line into a state-of-good-repair and improve reliability and on-time performance for intercity passengers.

### Q2: What are the key elements of the project?

**A:** The project includes:











- 4 new ADA-accessible Metro-North stations in the East Bronx
- 4 bridge rehabilitations
- Over 19 miles of new and rehabilitated track work
- 4 new and 1 reconfigured interlockings
- 5 new substations and 2 upgraded substations
- Reconfiguration of New Rochelle Yard
- The modernization of signal, power, and communication infrastructure
- New drainage infrastructure



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## Q3: What are the key project benefits?

 <b>Decrease travel time</b>	 <b>Enhance network reliability</b>	 <b>Bridge Communities</b>
 <b>Provide reverse commuting opportunities</b>	 <b>Provide a second MNR terminal in Manhattan</b>	 <b>Support economic development</b>
 <b>Improve regional transportation connectivity</b>	 <b>Promote sustainability</b>	 <b>Optimize existing infrastructure</b>
 <b>Improve Amtrak's intercity reliability and on time performance with state-of-good-repair upgrades</b>		

## Q4: Who are the project stakeholders?

**A:** MTA Construction & Development will execute the project's construction. Metro-North Railroad will operate and maintain the new service once the project is implemented.

The following stakeholders and agencies are integral to the successful delivery of this project:

- **Amtrak** is the Hell Gate Line owner and operator and a project funding partner. Close coordination with Amtrak continues so that the project can be completed efficiently, safely, and with minimal effects to Amtrak's operations.
- **Long Island Rail Road** completed the Grand Central Madison project in January 2023 to bring direct LIRR service into Grand Central Terminal, making tracks available at Penn Station for Metro-North trains.
- **Freight Rail Operators** use the project corridor to transport goods to the region. We will work closely with freight companies for their operations to continue unimpeded.
- **New York State, New York City, and Connecticut DOT** have been involved with operations and operations planning, and traffic.

This complex project will also require close coordination with City, state, and federal agencies; local elected officials; utility providers; the contracting community; commuters; as well as residents, job seekers, and business owners residing in Manhattan, Bronx, Westchester, and Connecticut.

## Q5: How does the Penn Station Access Project relate to the Bronx Metro-North Station Area Study?

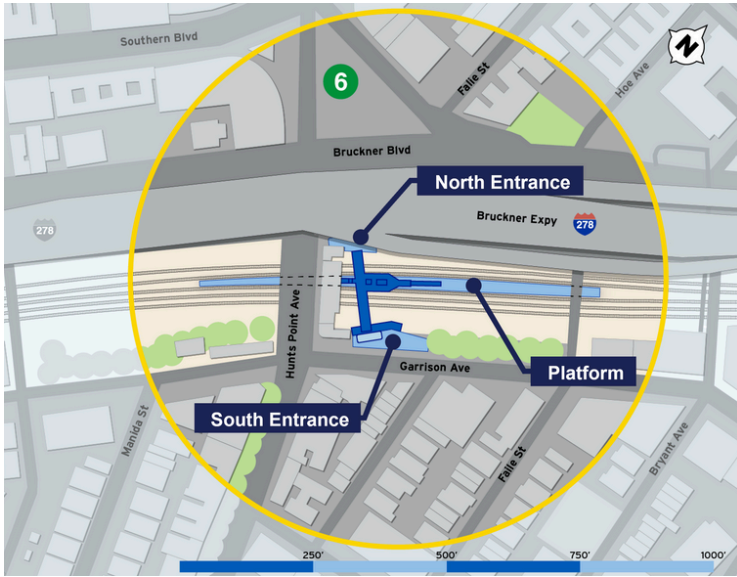
**A:** The New York City Department of City Planning (NYCDCP) is concurrently conducting the Bronx Metro-North Station Area Study (BMNS), which is a station area planning effort independent of the MTA's Penn Station Access Project. This study is primarily focused on first-mile/last-mile improvements in the new station areas, including bus routes and bike infrastructure, and is outside the scope and budget of the Penn Station Access Project. NYCDCP has held comprehensive information sessions and workshops with East Bronx stakeholders and is preparing recommendations to integrate the four new ADA-accessible Metro-North stations into the neighborhoods of Hunts Point, Parkchester/Van Nest, Morris Park, and Co-Op City. NYCDCP continues to closely coordinate with MTA Construction & Development, the NYC Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC), NYC Department of Transportation (NYCDOT), the Bronx Borough President's office, and the East Bronx stakeholders. More information about NYCDCP's study can be found here: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/planning/plans/bronx-metro-north/bronx-metro-north.page>

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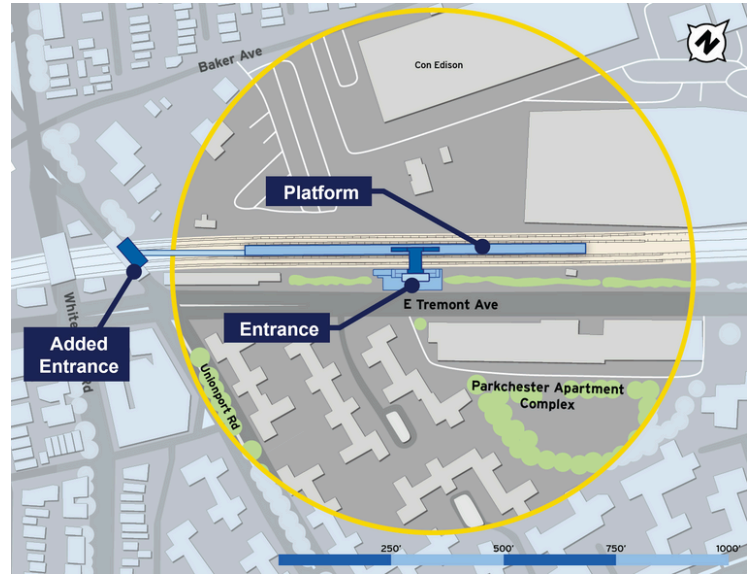


## Q6: Where will the four new stations be located?

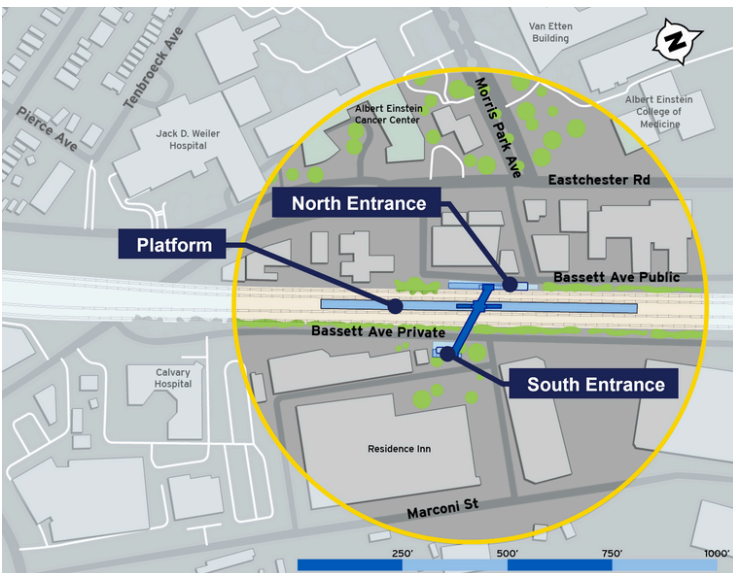
**A:** The project will include four new ADA-accessible stations in the East Bronx at Hunts Point, Parkchester/Van Nest, Morris Park, and Co-op City.



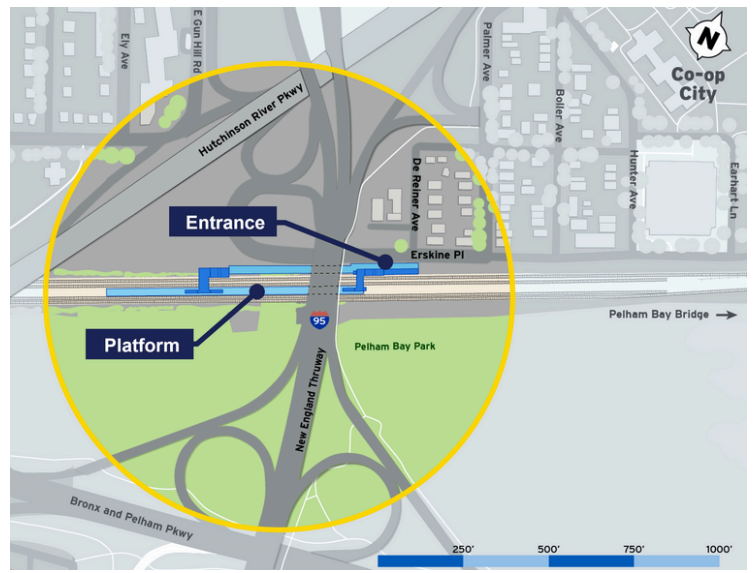
**Hunts Point Station** will be below street level parallel to Bruckner Boulevard and the elevated Bruckner Expressway, with station access from street level at Hunts Point Avenue.



**Parkchester-Van Nest Station** would be at street level along East Tremont Avenue east of White Plains Road, with station entrances located at East Tremont Ave east of Dogwood Lane and along Unionport Road Bridge.



**Morris Park Station** would be at street level along Bassett Avenue, with station entrances located at Bassett Avenue along both sides of the tracks.



**Co-op City Station** would be at street level along Erskine Place, with a station entrance located at De Reimer Avenue.



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## Project Construction, Timeline, and Funding

### Q7: What phase is the project in?

**A:** We are currently in the Design and Construction phase of the project. During the previous Environmental Assessment (EA) phase, the MTA prepared and published the EA in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). On December 29, 2021, MTA awarded the Design-Build contract to the joint venture of Halmar International, LLC and RailWorks. A notice to proceed was issued on January 3, 2022. The project is currently in the Design-Build phase. Site surveys and other work needed to progress design advanced. In 2023, MTA coordinated with Amtrak on a single-track Long-Term Outage to commence work along the tracks that was critical to project phasing. MTA coordinated with Amtrak on a second single-track Long-Term Outage in Spring/Summer 2024 to commission Leggett Interlocking, a critical project component that will provide operational flexibility for the duration of the project.

### Q8: What does design-build mean?

**A:** Design-build is an alternative to the traditional construction method of “design-bid-build.” Under a design-build contract, a single firm or consortium is responsible for both the design and construction of a project. This approach puts competitive pressure on bidders to harness innovative methods to complete the project faster and reduce the impact of construction. The final contract imposes financial penalties for failure to adhere to a strict project timetable. This approach incentivizes faster construction, places the risk for cost overruns on the Design-Builder, and rewards the Design-Builder for reducing impacts on local communities and commuters. Design-build has been successfully employed by MTA C&D in recent MTA projects including LIRR Third Track Project and East End Gateway and the LIRR Concourse Project. MTA C&D is executing the Project’s construction.

### Q9: What will the Penn Station Access project cost and how will it be funded?

**A:** The total cost of the Penn Station Access Project is projected at \$2.87 billion. The project is funded through the MTA Capital Plan, New York State funding, cost sharing with Amtrak, and federal funding obtained for the catenary system and bridge replacement. In addition, in November 2023, Governor Kathy Hochul announced that the project received \$1.64 billion under FRA Bipartisan Infrastructure Law grants.

### Q10: What effects on the community should be expected during construction?

**A:** Construction in any given area will be less than 18 months and would be adjacent to tracks, proposed stations, and other project elements. Construction activities may cause temporary impacts to pedestrian and vehicular access in the immediate vicinity of the construction.

The project team is working with the contracting team to minimize potential construction effects on nearby communities. The following measures will be implemented:

- Regular updates with communities through the project website and e-blasts
- Community and safety protocols, such as securing the construction site and keeping it clean and orderly
- Environmental control measures, such as dust control and a noise monitoring program

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## Rail Service and Operations

### Q11: What are the project's time saving benefits?

Departure	Arrival	Approx. Current Travel Time*	Approx. Time with Penn Station Access	Savings
Co-Op City	Penn Station	75 Minutes	25 Minutes	50 Minutes
Co-Op City	Stamford	110 Minutes	37 Minutes	73 Minutes
Morris Park	Penn Station	60 Minutes	25 Minutes	35 Minutes
Morris Park	Stamford	95 Minutes	40 Minutes	55 Minutes
Parkchester/Van Nest	Penn Station	60 Minutes	20 Minutes	40 Minutes
Parkchester/Van Nest	Stamford	85 Minutes	42 Minutes	43 Minutes
Hunts Point	Penn Station	45 Minutes	16 Minutes	29 Minutes
Hunts Point	Stamford	80 Minutes	47 Minutes	33 Minutes

\*Estimate based on existing transit options

### Q12: What will the fares for the new service be?

**A:** MTA fare policies for future service have not been determined. Future fares for PSA services will be comparable to those for existing New Haven Line service zones at that time, and the current City Ticket program may be applicable. Fare decisions are subject to public comment and MTA Board approval, and we will keep the public informed as the project progresses.

### Q13: Does the project include parking?

**A:** Consistent with MNR's guidelines, the project does not include new parking spaces or new parking facilities at the four new stations in the Bronx. However, the project does not preclude the construction of parking areas in the future. It is anticipated that many riders will walk and bike to the new stations. Stations will include kiss-and-ride areas featuring a large sidewalk, benches with charging ports, and a waiting area for passengers to be picked-up and dropped-off. The project team is coordinating with MTA Bus on any potential changes to the bus system and increases in bus service in and around the station areas. In the Penn Station area, no parking impacts are expected. Vehicle trips would continue to be principally by bus, taxi, and for-hire vehicles.

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## Q14: What safety features will be included at each station?

**A:** The Penn Station Access Project will be fully incorporated into existing Amtrak and Metro-North operational safety and security programs to provide passengers and employees with a safe and secure environment.

Safety, security, and accessibility features at each station may include the following:

- Tactile platform edge strips
- Fencing
- Lighting
- Pedestrian overpasses
- ADA-compliant ramps and access points
- Passenger refuge area(s) at the end of the platform(s) for use in case of emergency when typical egress from the station to the nearest street is compromised, where necessary.

### Managed by MNR

- Video surveillance system
- Electronic access control system
- Elevator management system
- Remote maintenance monitoring system
- Public address system

### Managed by MTA PD and FDNY

- Fire alarm system
- Emergency help point intercom system

## Q15: Will the project have any permanent environmental impacts?

**A:** The MTA prepared an EA in accordance with NEPA to examine the Project's potential environmental impacts including traffic, noise, and air quality. It is anticipated that the small increase in traffic due to the project would not result in any adverse traffic impacts in either the proposed station areas or intersections in the vicinity of Penn Station. The project team is coordinating closely with New York State and New York City DOT on traffic concerns along the alignment. It is anticipated that 17 residential buildings will have what's considered to be a severe noise impact (34 dwelling units). This will be offset by new soundproof windows. The MTA and its contractor will mitigate any moderate noise and vibration impacts with new, modern railroad technologies (e.g. under-rail pads and resilient fasteners).

The noise study completed for the Environmental Assessment can be found here:

<https://new.mta.info/document/90291>.

The traffic study completed for the Environmental Assessment can be found here:

<https://new.mta.info/document/90366>.

## Q16: Does the project require property acquisitions?

**A:** The MTA will require the acquisition of limited private properties to implement the Penn Station Access project. The acquisition of three full non-residential properties in the Bronx is required for construction of Hunts Point station and plaza, the Van-Nest A/C Substation, and signal and overhead catenary structures. The project also requires permanent partial takings of 19 properties for Oak Substation, Bronx River Bridge access, and Overhead Catenary System (OCS) in the Bronx, 48th St DC Substation and Gate DC Substation in Queens, and New Rochelle Yard in Westchester County. As design for the project advances, the MTA is continuing to assess project needs and coordinate with property owners on any potential impacts.

The MTA held a public hearing pursuant to Article 2 of the New York State Eminent Domain Procedure Law ("EDPL") on June 22, 2022, to present the proposed acquisition of permanent & temporary property interests for the project and provide the public an opportunity to comment.

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## Public Involvement and Contact Information

### Q17: Has there been any community meetings for the project?

**A:** The project team is committed to keeping the community well-informed on the project status and construction updates. During the EA phase, the project team provided updates to the Bronx and Westchester Elected Officials and held MTA Arts & Design selection panels and a public meeting on the EA. During the construction phase, the project team has held many stakeholder meetings to date including jobs fairs, an Eminent Domain Public Hearing, briefings to local stakeholder groups, and regular updates to the Bronx-Westchester Community Council and the Bronx Community Boards representing each station area (2, 9, 10, and 11).

### Q18: How can I receive project updates during construction?

**A:** As the project advances, the Penn Station Access Project Team continues to implement a robust public outreach effort during construction, including:

- A dedicated project website with up-to-date information
- E-blasts, quarterly newsletters, and social media updates
- Project email: [PSAoutreach@mtacd.org](mailto:PSAoutreach@mtacd.org)
- 24/7 Construction hotline: 347-262-7837
- Meetings with elected officials, community leaders, and other key stakeholders

These communication methods will be evaluated throughout the duration of construction and adjustments may be made to maintain effective community outreach. To make sure you stay up to date on project information, sign up for the project mailing list using the site-specific sign-up form on our website [new.mta.info/project/penn-station-access](http://new.mta.info/project/penn-station-access) or email us at [PSAoutreach@mtacd.org](mailto:PSAoutreach@mtacd.org).