



Faster Commutes. Expanded Service. Regional Connections.

Direct Metro-North service from the Bronx, Westchester, and Connecticut to Penn Station and Manhattan's west side is one step closer to reality with the award of the design-build contract. Penn Station Access will bolster equity, regional connectivity and reliability by delivering a new transit option.

With four new ADA-accessible passenger rail stations in the East Bronx and significant improvements to railroad infrastructure, Penn Station Access will support the local economy and attract regional talent by increasing accessibility to underserved neighborhoods, cutting travel times, and introducing reverse commuting opportunities.

The project will use Amtrak's existing Hell Gate Line to access Penn Station, maximizing the potential of existing infrastructure, while minimizing impacts on the surrounding community. It will bring the Hell Gate Line into a state of good repair, improve reliability and on-time performance for intercity passengers, and prepare the line for future high-speed rail.



What are the Project Elements?

In addition to 4 new ADA stations, the project will turn the existing 2-track railroad into a largely 4-track railroad, with over 19 miles of new and rehabilitated track work. The project also includes 4 bridge rehabilitations, 4 new and 1 reconfigured interlockings, 5 new and 2 upgraded substations, and the modernization of signal, power and communication infrastructure.



What are the Project Benefits?

A new transportation option is becoming a reality for commuters in the New York metropolitan area, bringing a multitude of benefits to the region and local communities.



Decreasing Travel Times

The project will improve access to underserved neighborhoods and offer a one-seat ride between West Midtown, the East Bronx, Westchester, and Connecticut. With four new ADA-accessible rail stations, East Bronx passengers traveling to Penn Station could save up to 50 minutes each way, and those traveling to Connecticut could save up to 75 minutes. Current Metro-North customers with destinations in West Midtown will save up to 40 minutes daily.



Reverse Commuting Opportunities

Reverse commuters will be able to seamlessly travel from Penn Station to Hunts Point, Parkchester/Van Nest, Morris Park, Co-op City, Westchester and southern Connecticut, and reverse commuters from the new East Bronx stations will have much easier access to jobs, education, and opportunity in Westchester and southern Connecticut. Not only will Penn Station Access expand transit options for New Yorkers, it will substantially expand the labor pool for employers in the region and increase job opportunities.



Regional Transportation Connectivity

A direct link to Penn Station will provide passengers traveling from the East Bronx, Westchester, and Connecticut with easy connections to NJ TRANSIT, LIRR, PATH, Amtrak, and NYCT subways. The new service will also expand access to other modes of transportation, including ferries and airports. With the additional options, passengers will be able to more easily reach destinations throughout the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic.



Improving Mobility and Flexibility

With more than 19 miles of new and rehabilitated track, Penn Station Access will turn a two-track railroad into a primarily four-track railroad, giving flexibility to Amtrak and Metro-North trains in the case of a disruption, which otherwise could delay or curtail service. The project will provide Metro-North with a second Manhattan Terminal, improving resiliency of the overall Metro-North network. By bringing the Hell Gate Line to a state of good repair, the project will improve reliability and on-time performance for Amtrak customers.



Delivering Cost-Effective Transit Solutions

Making rail improvements cost-effective is a priority. Instead of building new, costly infrastructure, this project utilizes existing transportation infrastructure – leveraging Amtrak's existing Hell Gate Line to deliver Metro-North service directly into Penn Station. Not only does this project save taxpayer dollars, it also minimizes construction impacts to surrounding communities.



Economic Vitality

With more convenient rail options, Penn Station Access will stimulate local and regional economies. New rail service to and from the East Bronx, Westchester, and Connecticut will benefit local educational campuses, medical institutions, commercial centers, and retail corridors by improving access to these hubs. Penn Station Access will make it easier to visit the East Bronx as well as to live and work there. It will also complement other planned and ongoing economic development initiatives in the East Bronx and the greater New York metropolitan region.



Sustainability

By greatly reducing travel times, Penn Station Access will encourage drivers to switch from single-driver car travel to mass transit. This will reduce traffic congestion and emissions. By improving transportation options and reliability, it will help avoid outmigration of jobs and residents and retain dense energy-efficient land use patterns that keep greenhouse gas emissions low. The project is being designed to meet industry standards for sustainability.



Bridging Communities

The project will connect communities along the Hell Gate Line. Educational campuses, medical institutions, shopping centers, and parks will be easier to reach – for Bronx residents and also for those coming from the greater New York City area, Westchester, Connecticut, and the Northeast region.



Fast Facts

Expanded Transit Access

500,000

Bronx residents within a mile of the 4 new Metro-North stations will benefit from improved access to jobs with the new service

Reduction in Vehicle Miles Traveled

80,000

fewer daily vehicle miles will be travelled.

2,850

daily trips will be diverted from personal vehicles.

Rail Service Plan

102

Metro-North trains are expected to operate daily on the Hell Gate Line.

60

Amtrak trains are expected to operate daily on the Hell Gate Line.

By the Numbers

25%

of residents within the East Bronx project corridor live below the poverty line.

90%

of residents within the East Bronx project corridor are minority.

19

miles of new and rehabilitated track work will be completed.

90

minutes are typically spent each way on daily commutes to and from the East Bronx.

5

years is the approximate construction duration for Penn Station Access.

Project Status

On December 29, 2021, MTA awarded the Design-Build contract to the joint venture of Halmar International, LLC and RailWorks.

The project is currently in the Final Design and Construction phase. Site surveys and other work needed to progress design advanced in 2022. In 2023, MTA coordinated with Amtrak on a single-track long-term outage to commence work along the tracks that is critical to project phasing.

The anticipated completion date for the Penn Station Access project is 2027.

