

Welcome to the Penn Station Access quarterly newsletter. MTA's Penn Station Access Project will bolster equity, regional connectivity, and reliability by upgrading Amtrak's existing Hell Gate Line and providing four new accessible stations in the East Bronx. Read on to learn more about recent progress, community engagement, and upcoming work. For past newsletter issues, click [here](#). For updates on specific areas along the project corridor where work will take place, sign up [here](#).



Foundation installation at Morris Park Station, March 2025

Project Progress: Laying the Groundwork

Spring is in the air, and so is construction progress! Construction is advancing at all four new station locations, and below we highlight a major project milestone: the Bronx River Bridge launch. We are also advancing the new Leggett Interlocking, which will allow the PSA project to move full steam ahead on the next phases of construction starting later this summer.

Bridging the Gap: Bronx River Bridge Launch

A conversation with Ray Engen, Project Manager at Halmar International

The Bronx River Bridge is being expanded to have a third span to provide space for an additional rail track, paving the way for the next phases of PSA construction. Ray Engen, Project Manager, led the effort to complete this bridge launch, starting from the planning phase over a year ago, through execution of the launch. “When you see something unfold that you’ve seen on paper for the last year, it is very rewarding,” Ray said of watching the bridge launch, “it makes this industry worth it and keeps us all coming back.”

The method used for the Bronx River Bridge launch makes this milestone even more impressive. Crews used a longitudinal launch, which is an accelerated bridge construction method used for construction in difficult to reach places, such as over train tracks or bodies of water, and was selected to avoid impacts to the Bronx River. “It took a tremendous amount of planning,” Ray explained, “the main reason we did this type of launch is due to the logistics of the area, to get a crane in there would have required a lot more support.”

Ray is no stranger to accelerated bridge construction methods, having led another impressive launch for Metro-North’s bridge over Atlantic Street in Stamford, Connecticut, which was also completed without interruption to train service below. Here in the Bronx, the team used an air winch to slide, or “launch” the 350-ton bridge segment inch by inch across the Bronx River and used a series of 100-ton jacks to lower the bridge into place. “Getting the girders into the job site was a major challenge,” Ray explained the team would “sit in meetings, discuss the plan, and adjust it to a point where we knew it would be a success.” With the completion of the bridge launch, the team can expedite construction and make use of increased Amtrak track outage flexibility. This bridge is just one essential element of this Project that will provide new Metro-North service to the East Bronx.



Crews using an air winch to launch Bronx River Bridge, May 2025

Community Corner: steMTA Events

In March, the PSA outreach team brought steMTA back to the Bronx, leading students at St. Raymonds and PS. 012X through an interactive lesson about the latest progress on PSA and the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) used to bring modern train infrastructure to life. Students designed and constructed their own model bridges from clay and toothpicks, applying what they learned to build and test structures sturdy enough to support a passing train (a model train, at least!) The PSA outreach team is excited to continue visiting schools throughout the Bronx to help spark curiosity and inspire the next generation of transportation innovators.



PSA Team at steMTA event with PS. 012X, March 2025

What's Next? Stations Take Shape

Work will continue at all four station locations in the coming weeks. Upcoming efforts will be focused on pouring more foundations, setting slabs, and installing concrete masonry unit (CMU) walls. Once foundations are completed, the structures will quickly take shape at Parkchester/Van Nest, Morris Park, Co-op City and Hunts Point stations, and the community will be noticing visible progress at each site. On the track level, upcoming activities will include a cyclical track outage (CTO), necessary to install new tracks and continue building out the new Parkchester/Van Nest station. Stay tuned for more updates as construction kicks into high gear this summer!



Concrete pour for entrance slabs at Van Nest, March 2025



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