

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](#). See the latest MTA project schedule announcement [here](#).



Steel framing at Parkchester Van-Nest station, October 2025

PSA Progress: Setting Steel at Parkchester Van-Nest Station

The first phase of steel erection is underway at the future fully ADA-compliant Parkchester Van-Nest station! The main station building structure is beginning to rise, piece by piece, as a total of 271 structural steel pieces were installed using the impressive Liebherr LTM 1150 crane. This nearly 300-foot crane helped make quick work of installing 168,589 pounds of the total 218,211 pounds that will make up the station building. Steel installation is anticipated to be completed in December.

At the same time, crews will also set two precast concrete staircases that will form the core of the station entrance. The main station entrance area will include two staircases and an elevator, which will eventually be connected to the island platform via an overpass corridor, creating the path to the train.

Upcoming Activities: The Station Situation

At Parkchester/ Van Nest Station, after the steel structure is in place, crews will begin installing steel decking and concrete masonry units (CMUs), followed by drilling for the elevator piston which lifts and lowers the elevator, and all the MEP (mechanical, electric and plumbing) conduit work inside the rooms. The next stages of construction to build out the station will involve track demolition, island platform construction between the tracks, and building the overpass corridor and Unionport Road entrance.

Work is progressing at the Hunts Point, Morris Park, and Co-op City stations, too! At Morris Park, crews are working on the north entrance, setting up formwork, rebar, and pouring concrete. At the Morris Park South Entrance, steel installation is anticipated to begin for the station house next Spring. At Hunts Point and Co-op City stations, utility work is ongoing. Crews at Co-op City are installing CMUs for the storage room at the far West end of the site as well as installing under building slab utilities and water service. These are the critical, but not as glamorous, components to having a fully functional station. Once the utilities are installed, existing Amtrak overhead signal power lines will be relocated to facilitate steel erection, which is anticipated to occur next Summer.



Concrete staircase installation at Parkchester Van-Nest station, October 2025



Steel framing installation at Parkchester Van-Nest station, October 2025

Community Corner: steMTA Events

School is back in session and that means more steMTA programming! The PSA outreach team has been busy engaging with local students along the corridor. On September 26th, the team visited P.S./M.S. 108 Philip J Abinanti school, near the future Morris Park station. After an overview of the PSA project, fifth grade students teamed up to construct their own bridge structures using Play-Doh and toothpicks. The bridges were assessed by which one could support the weight of the most marbles, which led to some close competition!



PSA Outreach Team at P.S./M.S. 108 steMTA event, September 2025

Meet the Team: Fred Haffner

With 40 years of experience in the construction industry, Fred now serves as Project Executive for RailWorks on the Penn Station Access project. Fred and his team are responsible for delivering key elements of the project, including the overhead catenary systems (OCS), signal and communication systems, power substations (AC/ DC), and track construction. Fred entered the electrical industry as a summer helper in high school, eventually leading to a full-time role at L.K. Comstock after college. He has participated in many major NYCT and MTA Capital projects, including the 63rd Street Connection, LIRR Second Track project, and most notably serving as Project Director for the Systems Contractor on the first phase of the Second Avenue Subway project.

Fred now brings his experiences to support RailWorks in its joint venture with Halmar (HRJV). Fred appreciates the opportunity of being involved in this highly visible public works project that will benefit the community, sharing “it’s exciting to know that it will provide the New York Metro area with a new, reliable and much-needed overhauled transportation system.” Fred is also a strong advocate for teamwork and mentorship. “It’s very satisfying that I can, at this point in my career, provide guidance to people who can then take the reins and run with them on this job and their next big job too,” Fred reflects. Now that the job has achieved the highly anticipated in-service of Leggett interlocking, Fred is looking forward to the upcoming opportunities during extended track outages, which will help advance the work and deliver the project to the riding public. Beyond the job site, Fred enjoys being with his family and closely follows his three children’s athletic pursuits. Fred and his wife are dedicated supporters of their two daughters in their collegiate lacrosse careers and their son in his high school lacrosse and football career.



Fred Haffner, Project Executive



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