



## For LIRR passengers a 'brighter' Penn Station

By: [Adina Genn](#) September 7, 2022

Long Island Rail Road passengers are now experiencing a "brighter" Penn Station.

The transformation, part of a \$559 million project, features a wider concourse and 18-foot ceilings. The project features \$380 million in state funding with 30 percent of the contracts awarded to minority and women owned businesses, according to the state.

The concourse spans from Seventh Avenue near the 1/2/3 subways to Eighth Avenue near the A/C/E subways. It also features 9,500 square feet of programmable color changing LED ceiling lights. The improvements come after years of renovation that left concourse-level storefronts closed, and commuters navigating tight corridors and low-hanging beams, which during the height of the pandemic, had substantially less foot traffic.

"I've not been shy in sharing my thoughts about Penn Station," Gov. Kathy Hochul said. "It's not been my favorite place in New York. For too long, it hasn't provided the experience that the city and the state are deserving of...it's more than a transit hub though. This is the beating heart of New York City."

The concourse is slated for completion in 2023. But officials say this phase of the project marks a new day.

"We knocked down walls, we lifted the ceiling," Hochul said. "We doubled the width from 30 feet to 57 feet, we raised the ceilings to 18 feet. I mean, this is extraordinary. And we brought in natural light. You're starting to see my vision for the new Penn Station. It takes us from the depths of hell, so you can see the lights and the skies of heavens looking down upon us. And we're getting there and it's starting in this concourse."

The transformation is expected to bring benefits both now and long-term.

"The governor is engaged in what can only be described as an historic effort to rebuild and revive Penn Station into something that commuters, travelers and all New Yorkers can be proud of," Kyle Strober, executive director of Association for a Better Long Island, said in a statement.

"The region will reap the benefits for literally generations to come," he added. "It is critical that Penn Station be modernized and reconfigured efficiently so that it can accommodate the needs of a 21st Century city that needs to remain the economic capital of the world. Long Islanders will obviously benefit from this project but so too will our shared future as New Yorkers."

Officials say the reopening of the concourse is on time and on budget.