



Forte Construction and Citnalta Construction complete modernization of 68th St.-Hunter College Subway Station

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Shown are: MTA CEO Janno Lieber, president of MTA Construction and Development Jamie Torres-Springer, FTA regional administrator Michael Culotta and MTA chief accessibility officer Quemuel Arroyo (center) celebrate with construction leaders and local disability advocates.

Manhattan, NY The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) celebrated the completion of a modernization and expansion project at the 68th St.-Hunter College Subway Station, bringing the more than century-old transit facility on the Upper East Side

into full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The FTA has invested more than \$3.3 billion over the past several years to make ADA improvements throughout the entire MTA transit network. According to MTA officials, the 68th St. station project was completed ahead of schedule and \$21 million under budget.

Located below Hunter College, the largest school in the City University of New York (CUNY) system with nearly 23,000 students enrolled, the 68th St.-Hunter College Station is a major stop for the 6 local train servicing Lexington Ave. in the Upper East Side neighborhood. With over 20,000 daily riders, the 68th St.-Hunter College Station is one of the busiest local stations in the NYC transit network.

General contractor Forte Construction served as managing partner in a joint venture with Citnalta Construction Corp. Together, the team completed this multiyear overhaul of 68th St.-Hunter College Station on time, while minimizing impact to the ridership. Working alongside Gannet Flemming, MFM Contracting Corp. and Mid-American Elevator, the Forte-Citnalta JV installed three ADA-compliant elevators — one from 68th St. to the mezzanine level and two from the mezzanine to the platforms serving trains in both directions — as well as new lighting, way-finding signage, help points, CCTV cameras, tactile edge strips, ADA-raised boarding areas on each of the platforms and more. A major utilities relocation was undertaken to create real estate to build these elevators.

As a vital hub in the NYCT system, the 68th St.-Hunter College Station was designated by the MTA as one of the 100 “key stations” prioritized to receive ADA- compliant accessibility enhancements.

Joining the celebration on behalf of then-U.S. Transportation secretary Pete Buttigieg was Michael Culotta, regional administrator for the FTA Region 2. Culotta acknowledged the hard work of the MTA as well as the efforts of the construction and engineering teams led by Forte Construction.

“The project here at 68th St. is a real game changer. These features transform lives, and they change communities, but they were not required when stations like the one here at 68th St. were built 106 years ago, back in 1918. So, today’s opening is truly significant,” said Culotta. Coincidentally, Culotta has personal ties to the area as a former resident who lived across the street from the 68th St. station. “I’m so excited to be here for today’s milestone. It’s a historic moment for the ADA. Today, we celebrate how we work together to help make our nation’s oldest rail stations accessible to people with disabilities.”

Doubling the number of entrances and exits was a crucial component of the comprehensive upgrades to the 68th St. Station project. Six stairwells were rehabilitated to meet modern building standards, and two new street-to-platform staircases were built to increase station capacity, including one mid-block, inside a high-rise building, where a retail store was previously housed.

Creating the necessary real estate to build multiple new elevators and entrances for this century-old station involved a lot of complex real estate and property acquisitions, as well as a major utilities relocation was undertaken. The construction team replaced a century-old water main that was three

feet in diameter and rerouted a complicated network of pipes and cables below the property.

Additional features include a series of new mosaic murals created under the direction of professor Lisa Corinne Davis of the Hunter College Department of Art & Art History, adding color to the redesigned station.

Forte Construction project manager Krzysztof Gazda said, “This was a very complex and high-profile project at this station that is such a key asset of not only this neighborhood, but also for the academic community at Hunter College. The ADA is a critical law to create access and economic opportunities for people with mobility limitations, creating new options to live, work, shop, dine or go to school in this community. Forte Construction is proud to have led this modernization project for the MTA.”

In 2023, the 68th St.-Hunter College Station was ranked the 40th busiest out of all 472 stations in the New York City subway system, servicing 5,164,087 riders in that year alone.

Forte Construction Corp. is a general contractor based in Islandia, with offices in Queens and Manhattan. The company is recognized for its significant contributions to ADA projects within the New York transit system and is currently involved with the installation of over 150 elevators as part of this ongoing station enhancement initiative.

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