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Press Release

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IMMEDIATE

Metro-North and Villages Celebrate Completion of Station Work At Hastings, Dobbs Ferry, Ardsley and Irvington

Customers at four mid-Hudson Line stations are enjoying new platforms, new canopies and windbreaks, elevators and overpasses thanks to a just-completed, \$65 million construction project undertaken by MTA Metro-North Railroad.

Railroad officials were joined Friday afternoon by State Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins and State Assemblyman Richard Brodsky in commemorating the project's completion at a ceremony in Hastings.

The work at Irvington, Ardsley, Dobbs Ferry and Hastings brings to 13 the number of Hudson Line station platform complexes that have been completely rebuilt going north from Morris Heights. Similar work continues at Philipse Manor, Scarborough and Ossining.

"The renewal of our stations, while operating a regular train schedule, is a rewarding challenge," said Metro-North President Peter A. Cannito.

"Customers really appreciate the handsome gooseneck lighting, the comfortable wire mesh benches, the improved public address system and even the pigeon proofing in the canopies. Everything is new and clean and designed to help our station maintainers to keep them that way."

"Great improvements like this one show how important the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's Capital Program is for communities throughout the MTA's 5,000-square-mile service territory," said Elliot G. Sander, the Executive Director and CEO of the MTA. "Without appropriate reinvestment in our transit network, projects like this one would not happen."

"This is a great day for all of the commuters who use the Hastings, Dobbs Ferry, Ardsley and Irvington Metro-North Railroad Stations to get to and from work everyday. How wonderful that all of the work to enhance the stations aesthetically also included important safety and accessibility features, including new elevators, and other improvements to ensure that these stations comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. I hope these improvements encourage more Westchester residents to ride the rails and take advantage of the good service that MTA Metro-North Railroad provides," said Congresswoman Nita Lowey.

"Using public transportation is a solid way to cut our reliance on foreign oil and to clean up our environment. The renovation of the four stations, and the 12 others already completed or being worked on, encourages commuters to use Metro-North instead of cars. This is \$65 million well-spent for commuters on Metro-North and for their communities," said Congressman Eliot Engel.

"I applaud Metro-North for implementing these improvements that will benefit all commuters in these four beautiful villages along the Hudson River. Metro-North's obvious commitment to safe, efficient and comfortable transportation only enhances these villages overall appeal," stated New York State Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins.

"These much-needed improvements will make life a little easier for the thousands of commuters who use the Mid-Hudson Line everyday. With soaring fuel costs, as well as the environmental benefits that mass transit provides, we should be doing everything we can to make mass transit as appealing as possible to everyone," said Assemblyman Richard Brodsky.

"I commend Metro-North for its accomplishment here. This will improve the quality of the commute for many Westchester residents," said Westchester County Executive Andy Spano.

"We are pleased that Metro North has devoted so much capital within the Village of Irvington. Their substantial investment in our Village will improve the quality of life for all that live, work or visit here," said Irvington Mayor Erin Malloy.

"The reconstruction of the platforms, the addition of handicapped accessible elevators and the upgrading of the station amenities are a welcome addition to the commuting experience. Add to that the new station café and we have a first-class entryway to our village. I applaud Metro-North for these upgrades," said Lee Kinnally, Mayor of Hastings.

"We are privileged to be the recipient of a beautiful new station in Dobbs Ferry which complements our magnificent waterfront and we thank Metro-North for all of its hard work on this project," said Scott H. Seskin, Mayor of Dobbs Ferry.

"Because of the renovations, improvements and quality of life enhancements Metro-North has undertaken, commuting to work will now be a much more enjoyable experience. They also make a positive first impression about our communities for first-time visitors who take the train to visit the river villages," said Greenburgh Town Supervisor Paul Feiner.

During platform demolition and reconstruction, the track adjacent to the platform had to be taken out of service. Trains were either rerouted to the platform on the opposite side or "bridge plates" were constructed to allow passengers to cross over the out of service track to board the train.

Despite this, the Hudson Line operated at better than 97% on-time throughout the three-year project. This so-called "opposite side" operation will continue until summer 2009 in support of the station reconstruction work underway at Philipse Manor, Scarborough and Ossining.

Elevators were installed for the first time at Hastings, Dobbs Ferry and Ardsley making these three stations completely accessible to those in wheelchairs. Tactile warning strips, Braille signs and audio-visual information systems make these stations accessible under terms of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Three overpasses were completely replaced with new, slightly higher overpasses in order to allow better clearances for freight trains, a New York State Department of Transportation initiative which contributed \$3.3 million to the project.

Additional station-specific improvements were undertaken as follows:

At Ardsley, the existing overpass was replaced with a new overpass south of the station building. Previously the overpass was accessed through the second floor of the historic station building. Under the auspices of the New York State Office of Historic Preservation, the project eliminated that connection and restored that portion of the station building.

At Hastings, while the platform work was underway, the station building was leased to the Hastings Station Caf  , whose owner, Avi Schwartz, made upgrades to utilities and interior spaces. The caf   is open 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. making the waiting room and restrooms available to Metro-North customers considerably longer than when the ticket office hours were Monday through Friday mornings only.

At Dobbs Ferry, permanent art work was installed as part of the MTA's Arts for Transit program. A huge floral mosaic entitled "Floating Auriculas," by Nancy Blum, was installed on the northbound platform. Consisting of a series of flower heads each eight feet in diameter, the glass and tile installation "leaves a happy imprint on the imagination," as Blum put it.

At Irvington, the main vehicular bridge over the tracks connecting downtown with the waterfront, was replaced as part of a separate but simultaneous effort. The \$3.9 million Bridge Street Bridge project replaced a 1913 bridge with a modern, multi-girder, concrete box beam superstructure. The bridge was dedicated by the village to Patrolman George E. Duggan, the only Irvington Police Officer ever to have been killed in the line of duty back in 1929. The abutments were rehabilitated and strengthened to accommodate the new, higher span. In addition, the parking lot was rehabilitated and expanded by 21 spaces in a separate \$1.9 million effort completed in 2007.

The project was designed by Stone and Webster. Construction was performed under two separate contracts by Halmar International and the Perini Corporation. Construction management and inspection was performed by Gannett Fleming Engineers and Architects.

Construction began in fall of 2004 and was completed this spring.