



MTA Press Releases

[Select Language](#) | ▼

Press Release

July 2, 2008

[MTA Headquarters](#)

IMMEDIATE

East Side Access Tunnel Boring Machine Reaches Grand Central Terminal

First Machine of Two to Reach the Terminal

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) today announced that after just eight months, the first of two 200-ton tunnel boring machines had completed its mile-long plus journey from the bedrock beneath the intersection of 63rd Street and Second Avenue to the terminus of what will become a new station and concourse underneath Grand Central Terminal. The second machine is scheduled to complete its parallel journey near the end of the summer.

"It is terrific that the progress on the East Side Access project is moving forward steadily," said Elliot G. Sander, the Executive Director and CEO of the MTA. "We look forward to inaugurating Long Island Rail Road service at Grand Central Terminal – a dream many have shared for generations."

Now that the machine has reached its destination, excavation will begin on what will become a cavern underneath Park Avenue between 49th and 51st Streets that will connect the newly built tunnel with parallel tunnels which will allow the future Long Island Rail Road flexibility in accessing all eight tracks in the new station under Grand Central. That work involves intermittent blasting and mechanical excavation that is scheduled to begin in mid-July and last for six to eight months.

MTA Capital Construction and the contractor working on the project, a joint venture of Dragados, S.A., and Judlau Contracting, have worked to minimize the size and impacts of blasts. One to two blasts per day will occur when blasting is underway, although the team does not expect that blasting will occur each day. Each blast will be imperceptible to most people in the Grand Central Terminal area. If felt, the noise and vibration may be similar to the muffled thud of a box of books dropped on the floor in another room.

The East Side Access project will provide Long Island Rail Road service to Grand Central Terminal for 160,000 customers a day.