



Old Astoria Neighborhood Association (OANA)
www.OANA-NY.org

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Don't Stop the IBX at Queens. Extend It to the Bronx.

New York has a chance to build one of the most important transit projects in a generation: the Interborough Express. It would connect Brooklyn and Queens using an existing rail corridor. It is a strong idea. But the current plan stops short.

The IBX is proposed to run from Brooklyn to Jackson Heights, ending at Roosevelt Avenue. That would help riders. But it leaves a larger opportunity unfinished: connecting the Bronx.

The rail corridor does not end in Queens. It continues north along the Hell Gate route into the Bronx. That raises a simple question: why stop at Jackson Heights?

Part of the answer is institutional. Beyond Queens, the corridor involves the MTA, Amtrak, freight rail, and Metro-North. Coordination is difficult. But difficult is not impossible. Agency boundaries should not decide the future of regional transit.

Stopping at Queens also leaves a major gap. The Bronx remains one of the least connected boroughs for cross-town and cross-borough travel. Trips to Queens or Brooklyn often require slow buses, multiple transfers, or detours through Manhattan. That costs time, money, and opportunity.

A Bronx extension would change that. The right first step is a formal alternative ending at Hunts Point Avenue.

Hunts Point is a major job center. It includes food distribution, warehousing, logistics, trucking, and industrial work. It connects to the 6 train and multiple bus routes. It is the most practical first phase.

It should not be the last. The next step is Parkchester. It has higher residential density, stronger retail corridors, and a larger daily ridership base. It would produce greater long-term returns.

This will not be easy. The Hell Gate corridor has real capacity limits. Some sections would need upgrades or additional track. That is not a reason to stop. It is a reason to invest.



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The region is already investing in this corridor. Penn Station Access is adding service and infrastructure along the same route. That shows improvements are possible.

This corridor also carries Amtrak and is part of the Northeast Corridor. A Bronx extension should not be treated as a local project alone. It should be a city-state-federal partnership. Federal support can include planning, capital funding, corridor upgrades, and transit-oriented housing programs.

The benefits go beyond transportation.

Better transit expands access to jobs. It reduces travel times. It supports small businesses and commercial corridors near stations. It increases property values and the tax base. It lowers household transportation costs.

It also addresses the housing crisis.

New York lacks housing near reliable transit. Extending IBX into the Bronx would create new station areas for mixed-use and affordable housing.

The Bronx is well suited for this. It has public land and underused sites. These are easier to develop than high-cost private parcels elsewhere. Public land also allows long-term affordability requirements and coordinated planning.

That is how cities should grow: build transit, then build housing around it.

New York has seen what bad infrastructure does. The Cross Bronx Expressway divided neighborhoods and displaced communities. This is a chance to do the opposite—to reconnect neighborhoods and expand opportunity.

The MTA workshops should not treat Jackson Heights as the final answer. They should include a Bronx extension alternative to Hunts Point, with future phases to Parkchester and beyond.

Measured only by construction cost, this project may seem expensive. Measured over time—through housing, jobs, economic growth, tax revenue, and shorter commutes—it will return far more than it costs.

The question is not whether New York can afford to extend the IBX to the Bronx.

The question is whether we can afford not to.