



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew Gounardes

Sen. Gounardes, AM Simon, MTA Announce Elevator Access Coming to Smith-9th Street, NYC's Tallest Subway Station

ANDREW GOUNARDES August 8, 2025

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The latest MTA Capital Plan approved by the New York State Legislature includes funding for new elevators and accessibility at over 60 subway stations

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Brooklyn, NY — New York State Senator Andrew Gounardes, Assembly Member Jo Anne Simon and the MTA today announced a plan to install elevator access at the Smith-9th Street subway station in Gowanus, Brooklyn. At nearly 90 feet above ground level, the

station is the tallest in New York City and one of the tallest in the world.

The station, which serves the F and G lines, is one of over 60 additional subway stations slated for accessibility upgrades in [the 2025-2029 MTA Capital Plan](#) approved by the New York State Legislature this year. In addition to Smith-9th Street, new elevators are coming to several other Brooklyn stations, including Court Street, Hoyt-Schermerhorn, 36th Street, 4th Ave–9th Street, and more.

Altogether, these accessibility upgrades will bring the subway system to greater than 50% accessibility, serving nearly 70% of New York City Transit riders.

Senator Gounardes and Assembly Member Simon have long fought for universal accessibility in the subway system, working alongside advocates, community members and other elected officials to win more funding for elevators and other accessibility upgrades. Senator Gounardes most recently celebrated the opening of [two new elevators](#) at the Bay Ridge-95th Street R station.

“Every day, New Yorkers hike the stairs up this station like they’re climbing Mount Everest, struggling to catch the train on time. And if you use a wheelchair, push your child in a stroller, travel with luggage or simply struggle climbing the stairs, forget about it,” said **State Senator Andrew Gounardes**. “With elevators coming to the Smith-9th Street station, that’s finally going to change. It’s simple: The subway belongs to every New Yorker, and it should be accessible to every New Yorker.”

“I remember advocating with my predecessor Assemblywoman Joan Millman for elevators at Smith-9th Street over a decade ago when it was last rehabbed – instead of relying on escalators which had a long history of breaking down,” said **Assemblymember Jo Anne Simon**. “At that time, the MTA would not budge on its refusal to install elevators. Adding elevators

to the station is a huge win for transit equity and for the thousands of riders who rely on this stop every day. Climbing the tallest station in the system shouldn't be an endurance test. I commend the MTA for making accessibility a priority in the Capital Plan, especially at tough stations like Smith & 9th that present greater challenges than most."

"No station better demonstrates the need for accessibility than Smith-9th St, the highest point in the entire subway system, and we're excited to start work there and throughout the borough soon," said **MTA Chief Accessibility Officer Quemuel Arroyo**. "Brooklyn has a lot to look forward to—36 new ADA stations counting projects in progress, commitments in the 2025-2029 Capital Plan, and upgrades funded by congestion pricing."

"More accessibility means more connections across the communities that make up our city, so this is great news," said **Mike Racioppo, District Manager of Brooklyn Community Board 6**. "It's also a reminder, thanks to the work of Senator Gounardes and Assemblymember Simon, that government can—and should—do good things."

"Subway elevators are for every rider and nowhere more important than at the highest station in New York City," said **Riders Alliance Executive Director Betsy Plum**. "The subway is the most affordable and efficient way to get around but it must be accessible. With our state leaders' historic capital investment in elevators, New York's iconic transit network comes that much closer to welcoming all New Yorkers on board."

"For NYCHA residents in Red Hook, Smith and 9th is the only nearby subway station—and without elevators, it's a daily struggle," said **Karen Blondel, Red Hook Houses West Resident Association President**. "We're incredibly grateful to Senator Gounardes and his team for making this long-overdue upgrade a reality and helping make our city more accessible to everyone."

"This is so important for our NYCHA community, especially our seniors," said **Francis Brown, Red Hook Houses East Resident Association President**. "This station is our connection to the rest of the city, and to our jobs, our schools, our doctors, and so much more. But right now, that climb to the subway platform can be a barrier, instead of a connector. Elevators will change that, and make it so all of our neighbors can access the train. I would like to thank our Senator for thinking about the Red Hook community."

(Image: *The All-Nite Images*)

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