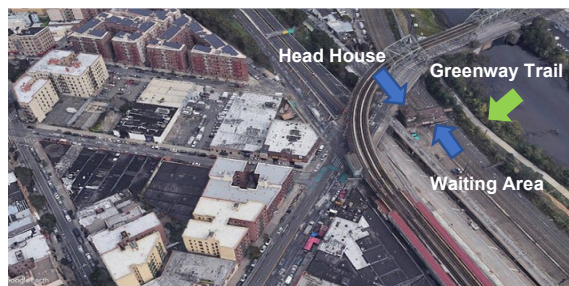
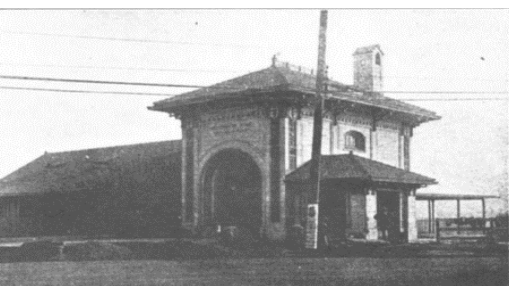


Bringing New Life to an Abandoned Amtrak Station

Providing an Action Plan for the Westchester Train Station in The Bronx, NY



Project Summary

Community: Bronx, New York

Technical Assistance: Action Plan

Former Use: Amtrak Train Station

Future Use: Community area and gateway to Bronx River Greenway

In 2019, the South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (SoBro) and the Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice (YMPJ), a community organization, completed a Brownfields Area-wide Plan and redevelopment strategy for brownfield sites along the Bronx River - Sheridan Expressway. The area includes a high concentration of low-income residents that are cost burdened by housing and negatively impacted by surrounding land uses including major thoroughfares and current and former industrial facilities. YMPJ was made aware that Amtrak was planning to demolish their Westchester Avenue Station, a former train station originally constructed in 1908. YMPJ informed Amtrak of its interest in acquiring the station with the intent to reuse the structure as a community space and to create a gateway to the Bronx River Greenway trail and Concrete Plant Park.

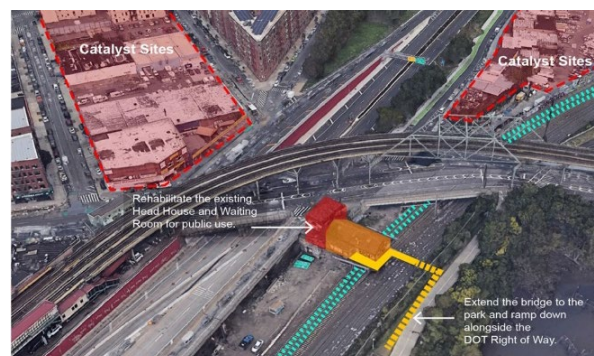
The Community's Challenge

The site includes a 2,700 square foot head house and waiting room structure that has been vacant for decades and has deteriorated. Amtrak has outlined a path forward; however, there are numerous steps that would need to be completed to initiate an offer, complete an acquisition agreement, and complete the implementation of the project. To take on this challenge, YMPJ and SoBro sought assistance in defining an action plan geared toward restoring the abandoned Amtrak station.

EPA's Land Revitalization Technical Assistance

In 2021, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Land Revitalization Program provided contractor technical assistance to complete a "Restoration Roadmap" to inform the local community about the opportunities and challenges related to repurposing, and potentially taking control of, the Westchester Avenue Station. Groups such as YMPJ, SoBro, the Bronx River Alliance, SLO Architecture, Loving the Bronx, and others worked together to outline how the Westchester Avenue Station can be leased or acquired, restored, and repurposed in an environmentally sustainable way. The roadmap presented several alternatives that would involve acquiring the site and renovating or relocating station components while undertaking new construction projects. The report also included order-of-magnitude cost estimates for each step.

By outlining a clear action plan, YMPJ and SoBro can begin the process of acquiring the abandoned Amtrak station. When restored, the revitalized station will preserve an important piece of history in the South Bronx, provide space for public amenities like public restrooms, and serve as a gateway to local trails.



Preferred Conceptual Alternative A (with options)

For more information, contact Schenine Mitchell, EPA Region 2 Brownfields Program, at Mitchell.Schenine@epa.gov.