

## LI stone provider rocking new deal with 500-ton rail shipment

David Winzelberg // January 20, 2026

Astro Aggregates, a Long Island supplier of crushed stone used in making asphalt and concrete, has received its first rail delivery of more than 500 tons of stone from Benson Mines to its Hicksville loading yard.

The Deer Park-based Astro signed a multi-year partnership a year ago with upstate Clifton-based Benson Mines as part of the two companies' initiative to deliver material from Benson's 75 million tons of quarried waste rock via rail to the Long Island, New York City, New Jersey and Connecticut markets, according to a company statement. The 350-mile trip from the upstate mine to Astro's Hicksville facility is serviced by Genesee Valley Transportation, CSX, and New York & Atlantic Railway (NYA).

"We are excited to see this partnership with Benson Mines reach this important milestone. We see the relationship benefiting our asphalt and ready-mix customers in the boroughs of New York City and Long Island," Marc Furman, president of Astro Aggregates, said in the statement. "As we continue to grow our market presence in the Long Island market and adjacent states, we will continue to market the NYSDOT certifications of the Benson stone and pursue additional state certifications. This material will be used to build the skyscrapers of New York City and pave the roads of all of Long Island. We see the volume of stone being shipped increasing from this initial load to using 500 cars per year and then steadily increasing thereafter."

Founded in 1883, Benson was formerly one of the largest iron ore mines in North America, but now provides construction stone, aggregates and timber.

### THE BLUEPRINT:

- Astro Aggregates received more than 500 tons of crushed stone by rail at its Hicksville facility
- The delivery marks a milestone in a multi-year partnership with upstate Benson Mines
- Stone is shipped 350 miles by rail to serve Long Island, NYC, New Jersey and Connecticut



Crushed stone is offloaded from rail cars at Astro Aggregates Hicksville facility. / Courtesy of Astro Aggregates

"It has been nearly 50 years since the last railcars carrying iron ore concentrate from Benson Mines travelled to the Pennsylvania steel facilities of Jones & Loughlin," Stuart Carlisle, Benson Mines president, said in the statement. "This represents a partnership that leverages the rail and logistics expertise of Marc Furman and puts a marker on the map for what we expect will be a multi-decade commitment to bring our stockpiled waste rock to the metropolitan New York market."

Astro Aggregates, which has locations in Deer Park, Hicksville and Maspeth, Queens, plans to bring a mobile crushing unit to Benson Mines to work through

existing stockpiles and then develop a static plant that can produce higher volumes and load railcars directly from the conveyor, according to the statement.

Nearly half of the aggregate moved in New York State is transported by NYA, which provides a cost-effective alternative to moving the stone by truck. Using rail lowers fuel costs per mile; reduces greenhouse gas emissions of up to 75%; eases traffic congestion; provides reliability, safety and supply chain stability, according to the railroad.

One ton of freight can move over 400 miles per gallon of fuel, and each railcar eliminates about four trucks from the road. NYA also

moves aggregates for other Long Island-based companies, including Posillico, Giaquinto Masonry and Nicolia Ready-Mix.

"Expanding rail freight has numerous economic and environmental benefits, including as a vital economic engine in helping rebuild the region's infrastructure while reducing truck congestion and its taxing effects on our roads, tunnels and bridges," said Marlon Taylor, president of New York & Atlantic Railway. "Rail also represents a cost-effective means of transporting construction material and other bulk commodities, including food-grade products, while reducing overall emissions, thus helping to improve regional air quality."