

## How to Visit NYC's Abandoned Old City Hall Subway Station

Old City Hall Station is a Secret Hidden Subway Station in New York City



by [JULIAN MACIAS](#)



A look inside the *Hidden Subway Station in NYC*, which has been shuttered since 1945. **Old City Hall Station** is of the most architecturally stunning subway stations (by master artisan Rafael Guastavino) you've most likely never stepped foot in.

**The City Hall Station** was the original southern terminus of the first "Manhattan Main Line" built by the Interborough Rapid Transit (IRT) Company. The line, opened in 1904, was intended to be a showpiece and crown jewel of the new subway system. Unlike the rest of the line, City Hall featured tall tile arches, brass fixtures, and skylights that ran along the entire curve of the station — a sort of miniature Grand Central Station. In fact, befitting the elegance of the station, it was even the chosen place for hanging the commemorative plaques recognizing the achievement of building the underground train system.

### How to visit the abandoned Old City Hall Station

The station is at the end of the 6 train line which terminates at the "Brooklyn Bridge/City Hall Station" in Lower Manhattan. It is located beneath the magnificent Municipal Building at the intersection of Centre Street and Chambers Street. Because the downtown-bound 6 train must make a U-turn to head back uptown, the train makes a loop through this secret station. Here's how to see it:

- Take the 6 train heading downtown.
- When the train makes its final stop at the “Brooklyn Bridge/City Hall” station, passengers are told to exit the train.
- Stay on the train and duck down so as not to be easily spotted. When the train departs the station it will pass through the (Secret/Hidden) City Hall Station. That’s when you can get a view of the station – be discreet.

Keep in mind that staying on the train isn’t officially legal. But it appears that MTA no longer strictly enforces the announcement that passengers leave the train at the Brooklyn Bridge station. Secretly visiting the station is somewhere in the ‘grey’ area of legality.

Safety and security concerns are the main reasons why the MTA does not regularly open the space to the public.



### Tours of the Station

Public tours have been offered by the [New York Transit Museum](#) about 16 times a year. Tickets cost \$50 per person and sell out very quickly. If you want to experience the City Hall station, your best bet is to get a Transit Museum membership, which costs between \$35 and \$50 a year.

Old City Hall station tours begin above ground with a historical walk in the area, followed by a visit to the station itself. Tours last approximately 90 minutes from beginning to end, run rain or shine, and require walking, standing, and stair climbing

*“Some people spent the entire evening on the trains, going back and forth from 145th street to City Hall for hours. Reveling in the sheer novelty of the underground, these riders wanted to soak up its unfamiliar sights and sensations for as long as possible.”* (Clifton Hood, 722 Miles: The Building Of The Subways [[via Forgotten New York.](#)])