



# GRAND CENTRAL



## 2025 Holiday Fair Request for Proposals Premium Booths

Grand Central is seeking vendor proposals from commercial retail brands/companies to participate in the 2025 Holiday Fair as an operator of the premium booth(s) located on The Bridge (west side) between the Main Concourse and Vanderbilt Hall.

We are looking for experienced partners who compliment the Holiday Fair's artisan vendors and will enhance the overall customer experience. This year's Grand Central Holiday Fair takes place from November 10th – December 24th.

# 1. RFP Purpose

For over 112 years, Grand Central has been a model for transit development the world over. As retail environments continue to shift in a post-pandemic world, the Grand Central Specialty Licensing program has become a critical resource bringing retail tenancy in the Terminal back to full vibrancy. Whether dining, retail, architectural tours, or special events, Grand Central acts an ambassador of New York that doesn't just help customers reach their destination – it is a destination.

Grand Central's annual Holiday Fair has been a customer favorite for twenty-eight holiday seasons, with an exciting variety of handmade and unique products at a wide range of price points. It is a premier shopping event with thirty-six artisan vendors providing a highly curated one-of-a-kind experience for savvy shoppers.

For the Holiday Fair Premium Booths, we are looking for a new crop of retailers to partner with us as we continue to explore new markets and refine retail choices. With that in mind, prospective proposers should share some commonplace goals:

- ❖ A business vision that tells a story, shares a passion, or points to a purpose
- ❖ Products that help showcase Grand Central in general, and the Holiday Fair in particular, as a premier NYC destination
- ❖ Established brands that bring a unique perspective and that embrace fresh ideas
- ❖ Brands that have strong social followings and can supplement Holiday Fair promotion through their own channels
- ❖ Compliment the Holiday Fair's artisan reputation and/or seasonal celebratory aspect
- ❖ Provide price points and inventory that strike a balance between approachable and unexpected
- ❖ Have product lines that represent the diversity that is New York
- ❖ Enhance the experience of Grand Central as a place for both users and as an asset to the Holiday Fair program

Vendors will be selected based on how well they generally exhibit the above listed qualities, and further evaluated based on the specific program area requirements listed in section 4.

## 2. Grand Central Holiday Fair

Taking place in the stunning beaux-arts Vanderbilt Hall, one of New York's most extraordinary shopping events welcomes countless visitors for a truly curated holiday shopping experience. This year's fair will feature unique local artisans and small businesses with a focus on quality craftsmanship and products made in New York and the United States. Vendors will sell a diverse mix of giftable items, including men's and women's clothing and accessories, original artwork, jewelry, stunning holiday keepsakes and distinctive home décor, self-care products, and endless varieties of handcrafted goods across thirty-six booths.

The fair receives extensive promotion through a synergy of print and digital advertising campaigns, abundant terminal-wide signage, and active engagement on social channels, orchestrated by Grand Central's Public Relations and Marketing agency partners. Their collaborative efforts extend to forging partnerships with local, tristate, national, and international media outlets in the lead-up to and during the fair. Additionally, the fair is featured on Grand Central's inhouse digital channels, which have over 450,000 followers.

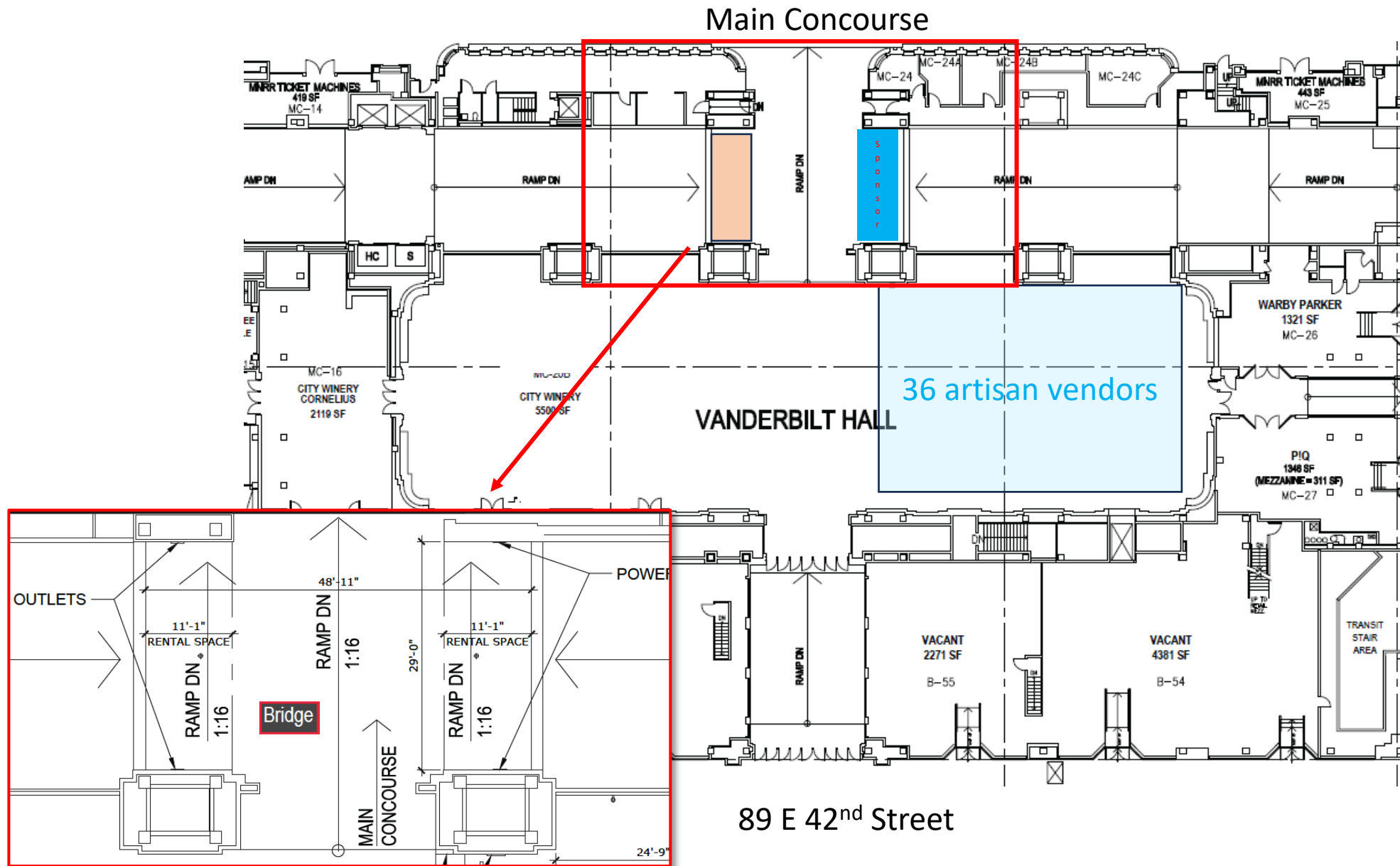
### **By the Numbers**

- ❖ 750,000 people visit Grand Central on average each day
- ❖ The 2024 Holiday Fair garnered 2.4 Billion estimated media impressions
- ❖ Centrally located major transit hub serving New York City, Connecticut, Westchester and Long Island via Metro-North Railroad, Long Island Railroad, the 4,5,6,7 and S subway lines, airport buses, and taxis
- ❖ Grand Central's subway station sees over 45 million riders per year





### 3. Location and Equipment





## 4. Application Process and Criteria

### **Proposal Due Date**

Proposals will be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis through August 15th, 2025

### **Submission Requirements**

Proposals must include:

1. Proposed compensation to MTA
2. Comprehensive description of proposed concept and use, including price range of merchandise.
3. Proposed Merchandising Plan that clearly note the display fixtures and locations of products to be sold at booth
4. Executive summary describing your company's background and your motivation for responding to the RFP

All documents should be emailed to:

[Dorit.Phinizy-consultant@mtahq.org](mailto:Dorit.Phinizy-consultant@mtahq.org)

### **Evaluation**

The selection will evaluate based on design, creativity, quality of products, and willingness to collaborate in promotional and marketing initiatives as well as:

1. Compatibility with GCT Holiday Fair artisan theme and how well proposer's concept integrates with and enhances the quality experience of GCT during the holiday season.
2. The quality of merchandising design and project execution
3. Business experience at other retail operations and financial capacity. The MTA seeks to assure that the successful operator will be able to maintain a smooth and uninterrupted operation during the entire Holiday Fair, and that they can timely fulfill all compensation obligations.
4. Compensation to the MTA

## **Permitted Uses**

### Mandatory:

- The retail sale of general and specialty merchandise that will complement the quality and mix of the Holiday Fair vendors and retail tenants in Grand Central Terminal.

### Disfavored:

- A category of use that is in direct competition with another Holiday Fair vendor, sponsor, or retailer in Grand Central Terminal and such competition is determined by MTA to be disadvantageous to the overall retail operations at the Terminal.

## **Prohibited Uses**

### Food Uses

Only proposals for retail uses that engage with customers will be considered. Any proposal that is, in the MTA's view, primarily a branding or advertising use will be disqualified.

MTA reserves the right to prohibit or restrict any use or sale of any items.

# 5. Terms and Conditions

## **Contact Information**

[Dorit.phinizy-consultant@mtahq.org](mailto:Dorit.phinizy-consultant@mtahq.org)

## **Fair Operating Hours**

November 10 – December 24

Mon – Sat 10AM – 7PM

Sun 11AM – 6PM

Christmas Eve 10-AM – 6 PM

Closed on Thanksgiving Day

## **Staffing**

Vendors must ensure their booths are adequately staffed at all times.

## **Booth Installation**

Vendor space must meet State Historic Preservation Office (“SHPO”) requirements, as outlined on the next page.

Vendors must submit booth setup renderings, electrical specs, and fire certifications for furniture and flooring for review and approval. Vendors are responsible to supply, install and remove all furniture, decorations, fixtures, and additional lighting – all subject to MTA design review and approval. Space must be ADA compliant.

All furniture must be floor supported. Nothing can be hung from the walls.

## **Security**

Security is provided by contracted personnel 24/7. Vendor must construct a locking mechanism for furniture or screen structure to properly close their space overnight, so merchandise may remain in place.

## **Radius Clause**

Proposers participating in other short-term markets within a 10-block radius of Grand Central Terminal will not be accepted in order to maintain the uniqueness of Grand Central’s Holiday Fair.

## **Power**

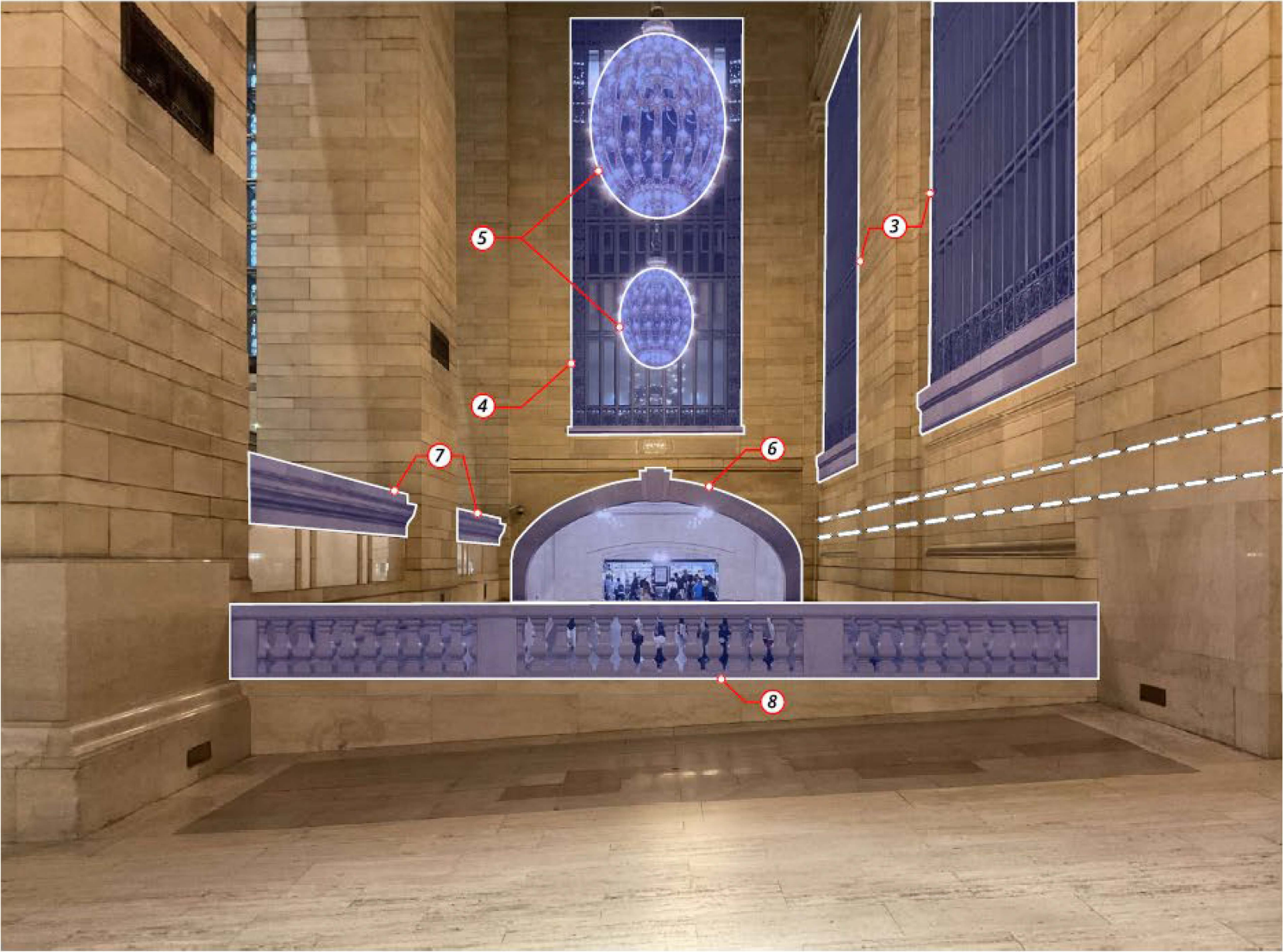
Each location has 20amp dedicated power outlet

## **Important Dates**

- ❖ Non-refundable Deposit due upon signing of the agreement
- ❖ Final Payment Due October 14
- ❖ Certificate of Insurance fee due October 14
- ❖ Vendor structure load in the first week of November
- ❖ Vendor Merchandise Load-In: November 8 – 9
- ❖ Fair Open: November 10 – December 24

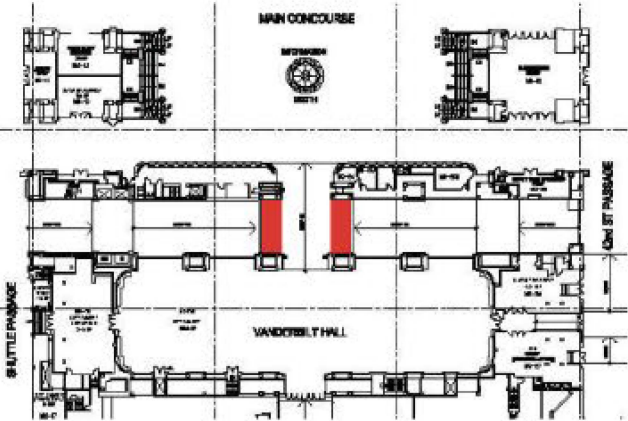


Vanderbilt Bridge – Event or Retail Pop-up



**NOTABLE CHARACTERISTICS**

- 1 DATUM: ~7'-0"
- 2 DATUM: ~8'-3"
- 3 ORNAMENTAL WINDOWS (SOUTH)
- 4 ORNAMENTAL WINDOWS (EAST / WEST)
- LIGHT FIXTURES
- 6 ARCHWAY OPENING BEYOND
- HORIZONTAL FEATURE BEHIND TICKET BOOTHS
- BALLUSTRADE



← MAIN CONCOURSE

VANDERBILT HALL →



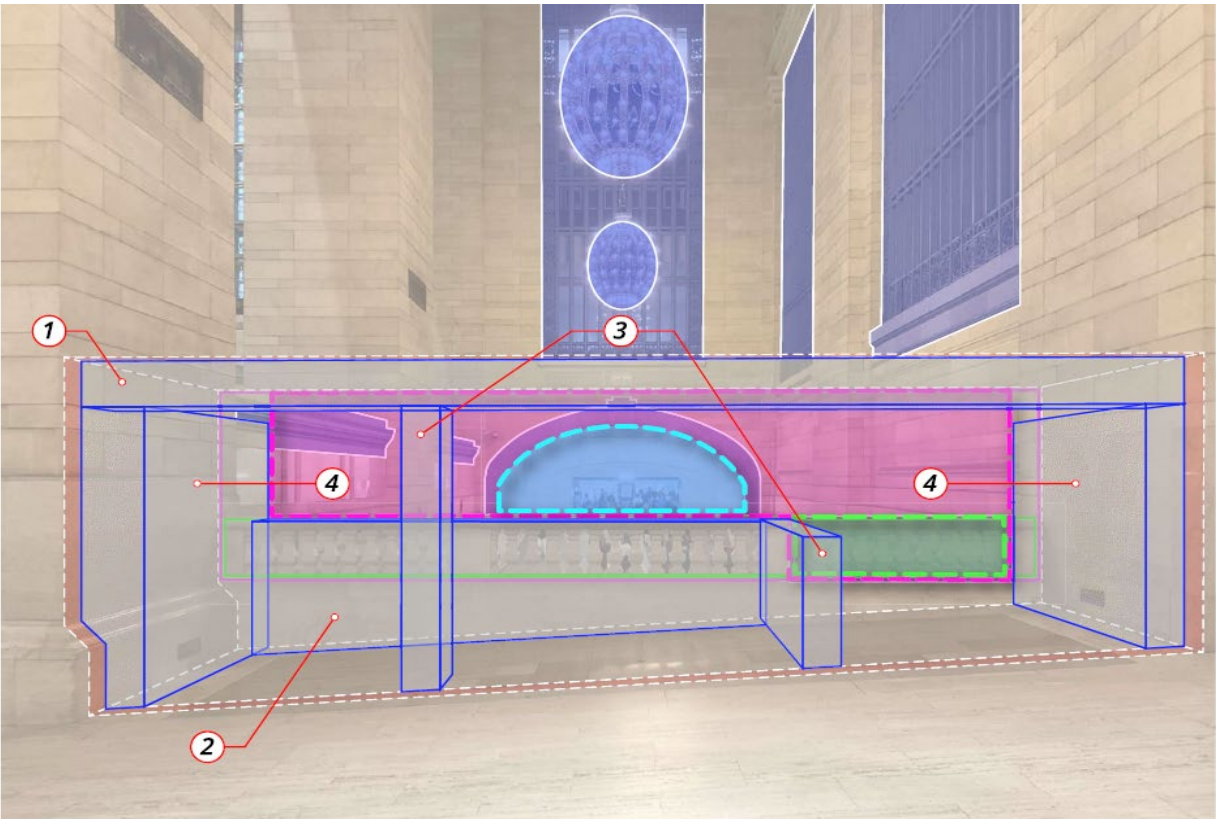
# Vanderbilt Hall Bridge - Installation Examples

## GOALS

- I • **GOAL IS TO MAINTAIN A MINIMUM OF 60% VISIBILITY THROUGH THE EXTENTS OF THIS VERTICAL PLANE, WITH SENSITIVITY GIVEN TO NOTABLE ELEMENTS**
- II • **GOAL IS TO MAINTAIN A MINIMUM OF 30% VISIBILITY OF BALLUSTRADE**
- III • **GOAL IS TO MAINTAIN 100% VISIBILITY OF ARCHWAY OPENING BEYOND**

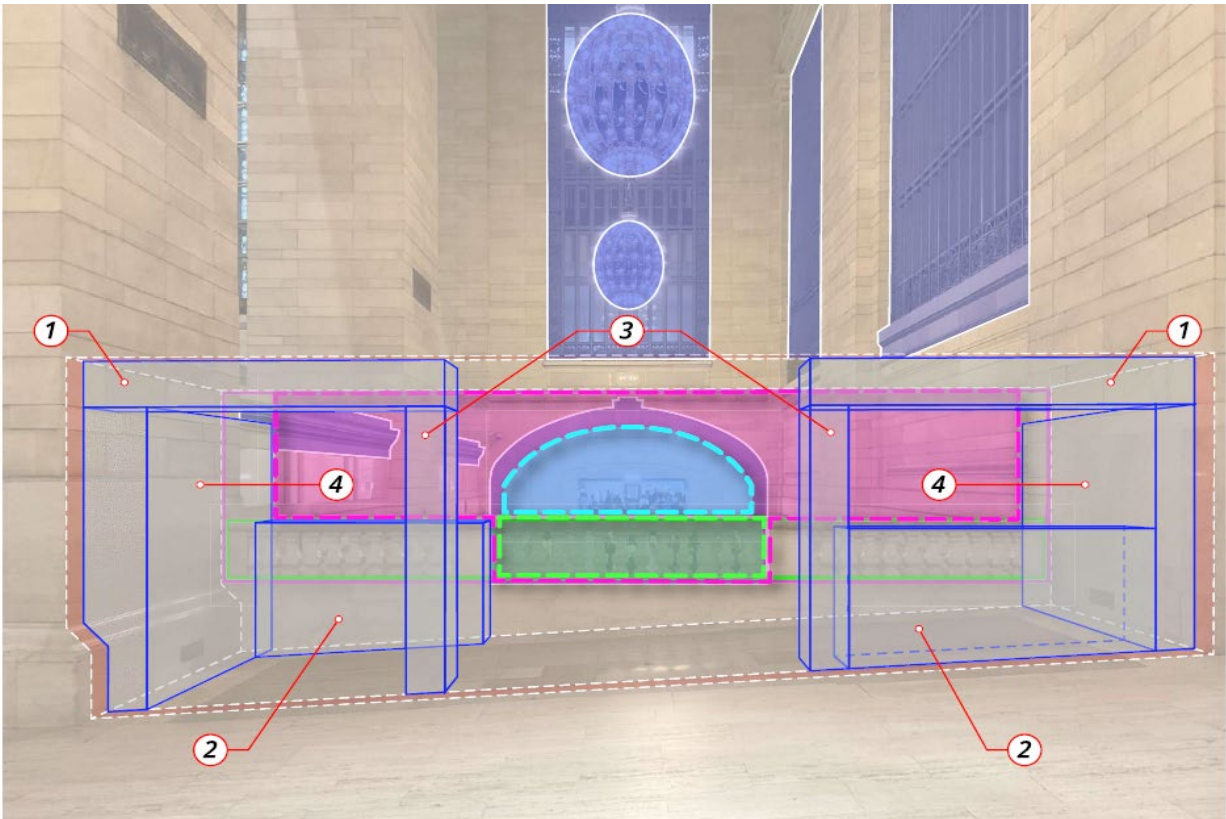
## GUIDELINES

- 1 • MAY NOT BE ABOVE 8'-3" AFF AT HIGH POINT
- MAY NOT BE TALLER THAN 15" AT FRONT
- MAY NOT BE DEEPER THAN 12" BEHIND
- 2 • MAY NOT BE ABOVE TOP OF BALLUSTRADE
- MAY NOT BE DEEPER THAN FRONT FACE OF WALL BELOW BALLUSTRADE
- 3 • MUST BE PLACED SO THAT ENTIRETY OF ARCHWAY BEYOND IS IN VIEW WHEN SEEN FROM FRONT CENTER
- 4 • USER MAY OCCUPY 100% OF VOLUME



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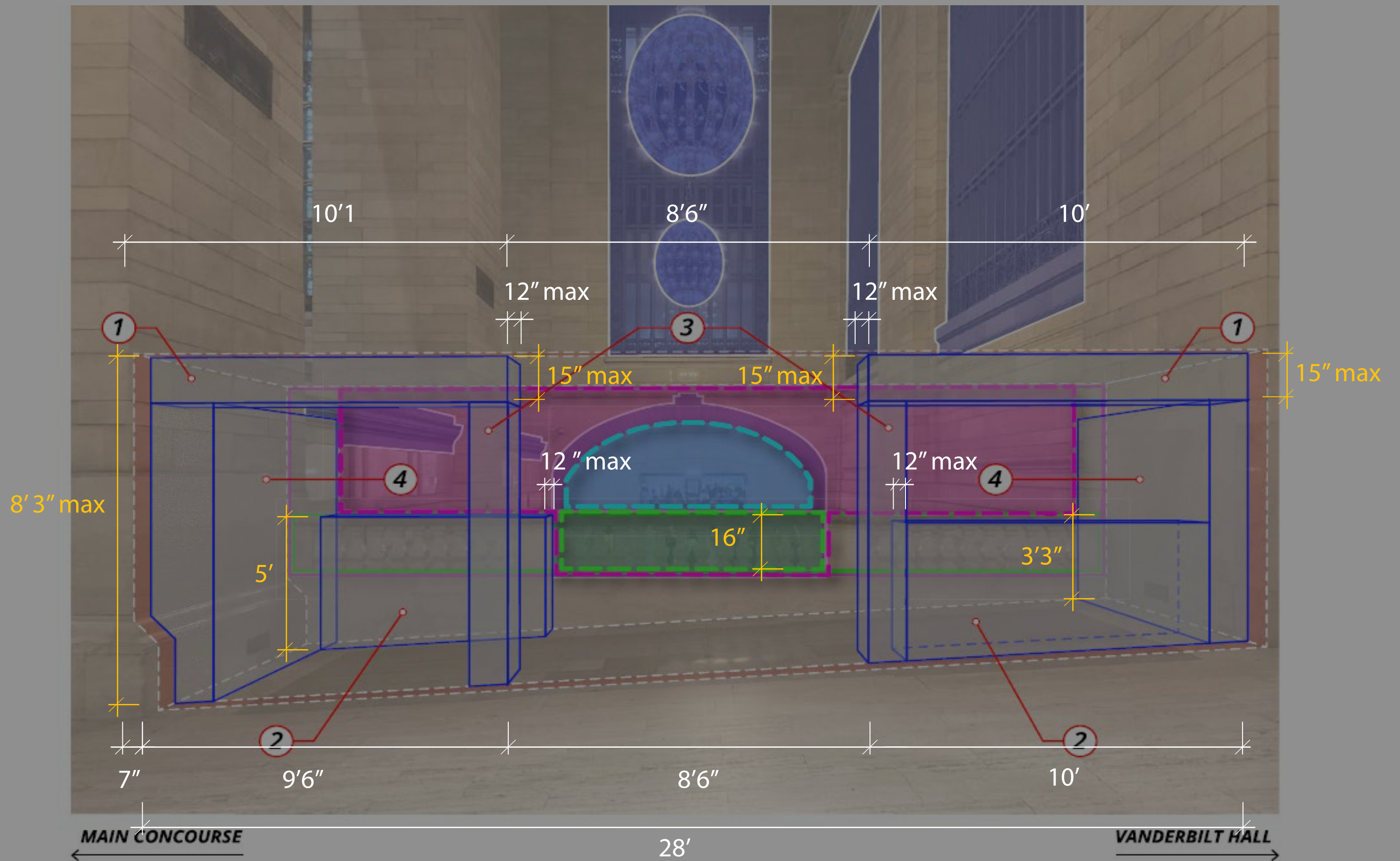
VANDERBILT HALL →



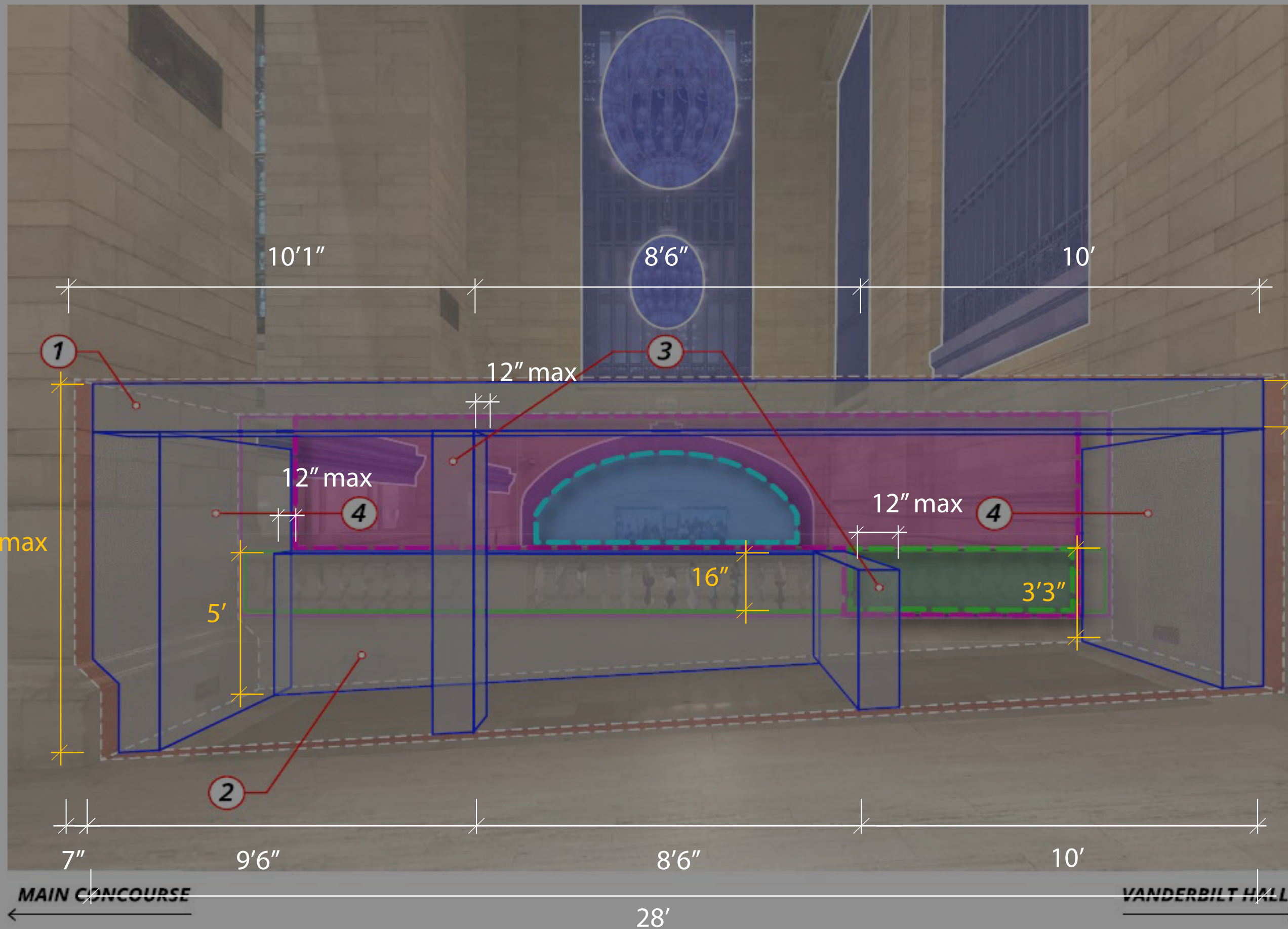
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VANDERBILT HALL →









## **MTA Reservation of Rights and Additional Terms**

The MTA makes no representations or warranties whatsoever with respect to this RFP including, without limitation, representations, or warranties as to the accuracy or completeness of any information or assumptions contained in this RFP or otherwise furnished to prospective Proposers. Proposers should make their own analyses and evaluations of the income potential and profits and expenses of participating in the Holiday Fair.

This RFP does not constitute an offer. No member of the MTA, nor any affiliate or subsidiary of any of the foregoing, shall incur any obligation or liability on account of any submission made in connection with this RFP (nor shall any Proposal be deemed accepted) unless and until an agreement setting forth all the terms and conditions of a transaction has been fully negotiated and a written agreement incorporating such terms and conditions has been fully executed and unconditionally delivered by all the parties thereto (the “Agreement”) and all necessary consents and approvals have been obtained.

The information provided in this RFP is summary in nature and has been prepared without audit or verification. No representations or warranties of any kind either expressed or implied, are made with respect to such information by the MTA, any affiliates, or subsidiaries, or by any officer, employee, or agent thereof. Under no circumstances shall any member of the MTA, or any subsidiary or affiliate, be liable for any of the costs of any Proposer or the selected RML in connection with preparing a Proposal in response to this Retail Scope of Work, negotiating with the MTA Group, or otherwise participating in this RFP process.

All data contained in this RFP document is provided for information purposes only. Proposers must make their own assessment of the risks and viability of proceeding with this business opportunity and proposal process. Notwithstanding any other provision of this RFP, and without any liability to any prospective Proposer, the MTA :

- A. Reserves the right to seek additional information, from one or more Proposers in connection with its RFP submission.
- B. Reserves the right to negotiate with one or more Proposers and to reject any and all proposals as it may determine, in its sole and absolute discretion.
- C. Reserves the right to postpone submission deadlines or cancel this RFP at any time including before its execution, if MTA deems such postponement or cancellation to be in its best interest. In no event will the MTA have any liability

whatsoever for cancellation of an award prior to execution of a license. All Proposers assume sole risk and responsibility for their expenses prior to execution of the Master Lease between the MTA and the successful proposer.

- D. May clarify or modify any of the terms and conditions or waive any requirement of this RFP
- E. Assumes no liability for any costs that the Proposer incurs as a result of responding to this RFP and contract negotiations, if any, related to this RFP. The awarded Proposer shall not bill the MTA for any expense that was incurred prior to the time that the MTA and the Proposer signs the Master Lease awarded from this RFP.
- F. No Proposer shall have any rights against the MTA arising at any stage of the solicitation (i) based upon any negotiations that take place, or (ii) because the MTA does not select a Proposer for negotiations, or (iii) if the MTA, for any reason, determines not to make an award to any Proposer.
- G. The MTA will not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, handicap, or marital status in accepting, reviewing and evaluating proposals.
- H. Employees of the MTA, and its affiliates and subsidiaries, are ineligible under this RFP. Any Proposal submitted by any such employee will be disqualified.