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**MAYOR BLOOMBERG, BUILDINGS COMMISSIONER LIMANDRI UNVEIL NEW  
DESIGN FOR SIDEWALK SHEDS THAT PROTECT PEDESTRIANS FROM  
BUILDING CONSTRUCTION**

*First Re-Design of Sidewalk Sheds in New York City since the 1950s will Improve Quality of Life, Reduce Construction Impacts on Businesses and Building Owners, Increase Pedestrian Safety and Increase Available Space on Sidewalks*

*New Design Generated Through International Competition Organized with the American Institute of Architects*

*Advances State of City Promise to Promote New Ideas and Foster New York City's 'Spirit of Innovation' to Improve Quality of Life and Help the City Meet the Challenges that Lie Ahead*

*Photos of the New Design are Attached*

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, Department of Buildings Commissioner Robert D. LiMandri and President of the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects Anthony Schirripa, AIA, today unveiled a new design for sidewalk sheds – the wood and steel structures built to protect pedestrians walking alongside buildings under construction. The design of the City's sidewalk sheds has remained primarily unchanged since the 1950s and the new design will improve quality of life, reduce construction impacts on businesses, increase pedestrian safety and increase available space for pedestrians on sidewalks. An international competition – the “urbanSHED International Design Competition” – was held to challenge the design community to create a new standard of sidewalk shed. The competition winner, “Urban Umbrella,” was developed by Young-Hwan Choi, a 28-year-old student from the University of Pennsylvania. The winning design was selected from 164 designs submitted by architects, engineers, designers and students from 28 countries around the world. The Mayor also was joined at the announcement by Department of Transportation Commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan; Department of City Planning Commissioner Amanda M. Burden, FAICP; Downtown Alliance President Elizabeth H. Berger; and Building Congress President Richard T. Anderson.

“Yesterday in my State of the City speech I talked about the innovation and enterprise that fuels our city and today we are showing off of that entrepreneurial spirit,” said Mayor Bloomberg. “Sidewalk sheds are a part of New York life, reflecting the face of a city that is constantly changing – yet the sheds themselves haven't evolved at all during the past four decades and its time to bring them into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The new structures will complement the

*(more)*

City's architectural beauty rather than take it away from it, while increasing space and safety for pedestrians and reducing the impact of construction on businesses and building owners."

"Sidewalk sheds are installed to protect pedestrians from construction or building maintenance work, and this design is a perfect way to improve safety and the quality of life for all New Yorkers," said Buildings Commissioner LiMandri. "This new design is great for building owners because less of your building will be hidden, and it's great for pedestrians because there's more space to walk, run or shop than ever before. I am confident this design will change the city's landscape and make people fall in love with this city all over again. I would like to thank Mr. Choi for his work and all of our partners who made this competition a reality."

"Sidewalk sheds, while necessary, hide the architectural features that make our streets so attractive and take away from what makes our neighborhoods and business corridors vibrant," said Transportation Commissioner Sadik-Khan. "This design invites New Yorkers' eyes back up from the sidewalk and lets them reclaim their streets even before construction is complete."

"Design is all about rethinking what we already know," said City Planning Commissioner Burden. "This competition created excitement amongst designers, proving that the city's vibrant streetscape can be enhanced with a smart twist on a simple structure. This innovative new design brings both amenity and delight to pedestrians, and makes sure that New York City streets continue to be welcoming, dynamic and young."

"The urbanSHED competition shows that good design grows out of effective partnerships among the City, the American Institute of Architects, the New York Building Congress and other groups," said Anthony Schirripa, President of the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. "As a result of this joint endeavor, the sidewalks of New York will be more pedestrian-friendly, safer and more sustainable. I thank all the designers who submitted their great ideas and all of our collaborators for joining with us to promote the power of design for a better New York."

The new design is a significant upgrade of the sidewalk shed that is widely used around the city. The "Urban Umbrella" design will:

- Improve neighborhood quality of life with improved aesthetics and more air and natural light reaching the sidewalk;
- Reduce construction impacts on businesses and building owners through a less obstructive design that allow more of the building to be seen;
- Increase safety through a modern design that eliminates cross-bracing and exposed bolts; and
- Reduce the amount of obstructions on sidewalks, increasing space on the sidewalk to allow for more pedestrian traffic.

There are approximately 6,000 sidewalk sheds in New York City, representing more than 1 million linear feet. The Department of Buildings will approve the winning design as a new standard and encourage the real estate and construction industry to use this model in the future.

The costs for contractors to install the new design are expected to be in line with installation costs for the current design, but long term maintenance and installations costs for the

new structures will be lower. The new design will not be mandated, but it will be in the interest of contractors to use the new design due to the reduced maintenance costs and in the interest of building owners and affected businesses, as the new design will obstruct less of a building's facade.

The urbanSHED competition will award Mr. Choi with a \$10,000 prize, and the Alliance for Downtown New York will fund the construction and installation of a full-scale prototype of the design at a job site in Lower Manhattan.

Mr. Choi, a first-year architecture student at the University of Pennsylvania, holds a Bachelor of Architectural Engineering from Korea University in Seoul, Korea and moved to the United States in the summer of 2009. Upon being selected as a finalist, Mr. Choi teamed up with Sarrah Khan, a professional engineer, and Andres Cortes, a registered architect, of the New York-based design firm Agencie Group to further develop his shed design.

The competition was sponsored by the Department of Buildings, American Institute of Architects, Alliance for Downtown New York, ABNY Foundation, Illuminating Engineering Society New York City Section and New York Building Congress, with additional support from the Department of Transportation, the Department of City Planning and the Structural Engineers Association of New York.

The winning design was selected by a jury comprised of City Planning Commissioner Amanda M. Burden, FAICP; David M. Childs, FAIA, of Skidmore, Owings and Merrill; Craig Dykers of Snøhetta; Buildings Commissioner LiMandri; Jean Oei of Morphosis; Transportation Commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan; Craig Michael Schwitter, P.E., of Buro Happold North America; Frank Sciame, CEO of F.J. Sciame Construction Co., Inc., and Ada Tolla of LOT-EK. Susanna Sirefman of Dovetail Design Strategists was the competition advisor overseeing the development and management of the competition.

During the first stage of the competition, the selection jury chose three finalists based on criteria focused on safety, sustainability and constructability. Designs were also evaluated on their use of natural light and the required electrical lighting, impact on the streetscape and pedestrian experience, and improvements to structural components.

In the second stage, the competition awarded the three finalists with \$5,000 to further develop their concept. They also received recommendations from a technical advisory group of leading design and construction industry stakeholders. All submitted designs are featured at [www.urbanshed.org](http://www.urbanshed.org), and the three finalists' designs are on view at the Center for Architecture, 536 LaGuardia Place, through February 10. Additional information on the competition is available at [www.nyc.gov](http://www.nyc.gov).

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Contact:	Stu Loeser/Marc LaVorgna (Mayor)	(212) 788-2958
	Tony Sclafani/Carly Sullivan (DOB)	(212) 566-3473
	Emily Nemens (AIANY)	(212) 358-6126