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Downtown Alliance Joins Mayor Bloomberg to Unveil New State-of-the-Art Sidewalk Shed in Lower Manhattan

*- Enhancing Pedestrian Experience,
New Sidewalk Shed Prototype Installed at 100 Broadway –*



New York, NY (December 7, 2011) – Representing the first major overhaul to the sidewalk shed in 60 years, Alliance for Downtown New York President Elizabeth H. Berger joined Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Buildings Commissioner Robert LiMandri, Council Member Margaret Chin, Executive Director of the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects Rick Bell and Urban Umbrella designers to unveil the first prototype of the Urban Umbrella, the winning design from the urbanSHED International Design Competition.

“With nearly 20 *Re:Construction* public art installations up for viewing below Chambers Street, Lower Manhattan is no stranger to finding innovative ways recast construction sites as canvases for innovative public art and architecture,” Berger said. “The Downtown Alliance is pleased to support the Bloomberg Administration’s creative approach to mitigating construction and improving the pedestrian experience, and I am delighted that Commissioner LiMandri chose to pilot this innovative and exciting urbanSHED project right here in Lower Manhattan.”

“Great public design is an important part of every great city – especially New York,” said Mayor Bloomberg. “Over the past decade, our Administration has been dedicated to encouraging good design in all aspects of the city. The new sidewalk shed is part of that effort, but it will also improve public safety, storefront visibility and the experience of pedestrians.”

The competition was held to challenge the design community to create a new standard of sidewalk shed – temporary structures built to protect pedestrians walking alongside buildings under construction. The prototype of the new sidewalk shed was unveiled in Lower Manhattan at 100 Broadway, which is owned and operated by Madison Capital. The competition’s winning design was selected from 164 designs submitted by architects, engineers, designers and students from 28 countries around the world.



“The Urban Umbrella is a perfect combination of design elegance and construction safety that will complement our City’s sidewalks and businesses rather than hide them,” said Buildings Commissioner LiMandri. “This prototype is safer and more pleasing to the eye than the current model, and we expect many property owners will take advantage of this new design during construction operations. The sidewalk shed is critical to ensuring public safety in such a dense, urban environment, but for too many years, it has become an eyesore for New Yorkers. The Urban Umbrella is the solution to that problem.”

Supported by the Alliance for Downtown New York and REBNY, the Urban Umbrella was constructed to incorporate new safety and aesthetic features that vastly improve the pedestrian experience. The new structure offers significant benefits to the real estate and business community, including the elimination of cross-bracing that visually obstructs ground-floor storefronts and building entrances. Sidewalk sheds are required during construction of new buildings 40 feet or higher and the demolition of buildings 25 feet or higher. There are approximately 6,000 sheds installed in New York City.

To view pictures and video from the event please go to: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/downtownny/sets/72157628322885283/> and video http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jE1y_Qh9lo8. For more information on the Urban Umbrella, visit www.nyc.gov/buildings. To order the Urban Umbrella, contact the Agencie Group at urbanumbrella@agenciegrou.com.

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