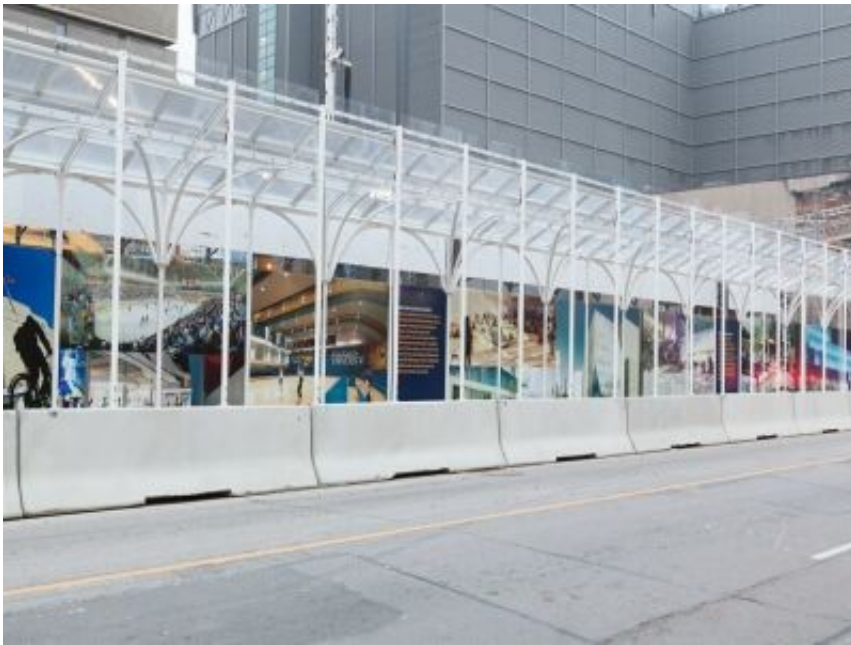


Toronto pedestrians protected by 'Urban Umbrella' during construction

October 26 2012



Forget that traditional post-no-bills plywood scaffolding familiar to pedestrians in every growing city. Great Gulf and Ryerson University are providing safety with grand style at their construction sites. The developer and university are working with New York-based Urban Umbrella to cover sidewalks with gracefully arching steel frames and translucent panels, adding a chic design element to an essential safety function.

Urban Umbrella's functional, safe and stylized scaffolding will be used for the first time in Canada this October by Great Gulf at its One Bloor condo development on the corner of Yonge and Bloor, and by Ryerson University for the construction of the Student Learning Centre at Yonge and Gould streets.

"This is unlike anything you have ever seen," said Alan Vihant, Senior Vice President of High Rise Development for Great Gulf, which is building the much anticipated 75-story luxury condominium One Bloor, at the southeast corner of Yonge and Bloor streets "Urban Umbrella compliments the streetscape. It's a functional sculpture that invites pedestrians and enhances storefronts. You've got to see it to fully appreciate it."

Ryerson University's location in downtown Toronto gives it a special relationship to the [urban landscape](#). "We're proud of our university's many connections to the people who live and work right alongside our campus," says Julia Hanigsberg, Ryerson's Vice-President of Administration and Finance. "As we outlined in our Master Plan, Ryerson is dedicated city-building with an emphasis on putting people first through pedestrianization and a commitment to design excellence. Innovative technologies like Urban Umbrella embody these goals while making our neighbourhood safer and more visually appealing."

Urban Umbrella started to gain notice after winning an international design competition sponsored by the NYC Department of Buildings. The company's designs were embraced by New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg and began being adopted for some building projects in that city.

"With construction pushing Toronto to the height and density of a metropolis like New York, Toronto now faces the same problem that New York faces," said Sarrah Khan, the Canadian engineer of Urban

Umbrella. "Buildings must go up and come down, but we must protect the life of the city during this process. Urban Umbrella, with its graceful arcs and natural light transmission, allow people to enjoy and experience the city during construction.

For Great Gulf, the decision to work with Urban Umbrella was a natural one.

"One Bloor is going to be a very special place, perhaps one of Toronto's most prestigious addresses," said Mr. Vihant. "We understand what a special location we have and we are going to be thinking about the amenities and design every step of the way. One Bloor is going to be a great home for many people, and we appreciate and respect our neighbours and the people of Toronto who enjoy this neighbourhood. "

Toronto City Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, whose ward includes the development areas, said she was happy to see the stylish safety amenities.

"We live in a growing and transforming city that is welcoming thousands of new residents every year. Construction is inevitable – it is also the first step in building communities. This project demonstrates that we can commit ourselves to a liveable, safe and beautiful community from day one."

Provided by Ryerson University

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