

# CRAIN'S

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## **Making over the sidewalk shed**

By Amanda Fung

*The New York Building Congress launched a design competition on improving the look of the ubiquitous shed.*

There's a new movement to beautify the ugly metal and plywood sidewalk sheds that wrap around buildings across the city. The New York Building Congress, an advocacy group, launched a design competition in search of a better sidewalk shed and more than 30 firms participated, according to The New York Times. A winner is expected to be announced on Sept. 25.

This wouldn't be the first time industry officials tried to make the sheds, which protect pedestrians from construction site debris, more stylish. Back in 2009, a similar contest was held and a prototype of the winning design, dubbed the Urban Umbrella, graced a financial district office building at 100 Broadway for about two months in 2011. But it was too expensive to deploy and the umbrella was dismantled, and the concept of an aesthetically pleasing shed faded.

Even this time around, cost will be a big factor in whether prettier sheds will be adopted. Many developers said unless the city offers incentives or requires more attractive sheds to go up at construction sites the concept will fade again.

For now, random designer sheds do pop up in the city—there's one by architect Zaha Hadid at a condo development site adjacent to the High Line that will remain until the Related Cos. project is completed in a few years.