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Just a few umbrellas open up in Times Square

By [Lisa Fickenscher](#)

Published: August 18, 2009 - 3:32 pm

A coalition of outdoor sign companies that recently formed to have a greater say in the city's development plans for Times Square may have scored its first victory.

The city's plan to furnish Times Square with tables and chairs had called for many more sun umbrellas than were installed Monday when the city replaced temporary plastic furniture with a stronger metal variety.

There are just 19 umbrellas to the 650 chairs and 250 tables that were moved on Monday into pedestrian plazas on Broadway.

"The original plan definitely had more umbrellas," said Tim Tompkins, president of the Times Square Alliance. "There is still plenty of open air, but that does set up the possibility for the umbrellas to multiply."

A new organization representing the outdoor sign industry in the neighborhood, the Times Square Advertising Coalition, is concerned that the umbrellas could impede peoples' views of the 150 flashing signs in the area.

The group, comprised of top executives from outdoor sign companies, Clear Channel Spectacolor and Sherwood Equities, as well as major advertisers and retailers, wants to have a greater say in the city's development plans for Times Square.

According to Mr. Tompkins, who is also a member of the TSAC board, there have been discussions over the umbrellas between the city's Department of Transportation, which is spearheading the initiative, and the sign companies.

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