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**DIAMOND SCHMITT REIMAGINES BRAMALEA CIVIC CENTRE
AS TORONTO METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY'S
NEW SCHOOL OF MEDICINE**

*The adaptive reuse project integrates medical education,
clinical care, and community engagement, expanding equitable
healthcare access in Peel Region.*



Toronto, ON, Canada, March 25, 2026 – Phase One of Toronto Metropolitan University's new School of Medicine is now open, establishing a new model for community-integrated medical education in one of Canada's fastest-growing and most diverse regions. Designed by Diamond Schmitt, the project transforms the former Bramalea Civic Centre into a contemporary academic environment that integrates medical education with a public primary care clinic—directly addressing healthcare access in Peel Region.

“It is an incredible opportunity for a school to expand their reach and capacity to serve its community through a close integration between teaching and practice. When we looked to transform the former civic building into a place of healing and learning, we drew inspiration from local ecologies as way to bring new life to the space,” says Senior Associate Haley Zhou. *“This desire to engage the design with its immediate surroundings mirrors the aspirations of the school program to contribute to the care of its own diverse community. With our unique combination of expertise in both health care facilities and post secondary institutions, we looked to create spaces that encourages both collaboration and exchange. Relationships that will be fostered between students, teachers, healthcare professionals and other experts across TMU’s programs under one roof to help each other become the next generation of healthcare leaders.”*

The design retains the strong civic presence of the original 1970s brutalist structure while introducing light, openness, and transparency throughout. Through the removal of interior barriers and the transformation of the four-storey atrium, the former civic building has been reimaged as a welcoming and inclusive academic environment where students, faculty, and community members intersect.

“By transforming a former civic building into a place of medical learning and care, the project extends the building’s original public purpose modernizing the space to remove barriers, advance equitable access, and create an inviting environment for the community,” says Senior Associate Dennis Giobbe.

At the centre of the school is the renewed atrium, which serves as a crossroads for learning, gathering, and exchange. Designed as a safe and inclusive space, it supports both formal and informal interaction—encouraging dialogue between students, educators, and the surrounding community.

Indigenous design principles informed the project through collaboration with Two Row Architect, an Indigenous-owned firm, and guidance from TMU’s Indigenous Design Guidelines. Within the interconnected atrium, architectural elements reference the natural

and cultural landscape of the region. The building's original structural columns are clad in wood, evoking the tall pines of nearby Chinguacousy Park—whose name translates from Ojibwe as “Land of Tall Pines”—creating the feeling of being under a forest canopy. Above, an Ojibwe star map spans the ceiling, referencing the celestial knowledge systems that have guided Indigenous peoples for generations. Along the floor, portions of the original tile have been preserved and interwoven with new tile patterns inspired by the structure of a Wampum belt.

The School of Medicine is organized around three interconnected environments: active learning spaces for clinical training and the central atrium that functions as the social heart of the building which are part of Phase One; and academic and faculty areas that support research and administration which will be completed in Phase Two. Reflecting modern medical education—focused on evidence-based, simulation-based, and small group learning—the design prioritizes flexibility and collaboration, supporting interaction between students, educators, clinicians, and the community.

Active learning and clinical engagement are concentrated in the south wing of the building, anchored by a ground-floor primary care clinic that provides essential health services to local residents. By integrating the clinic directly into the academic environment, the school offers students meaningful exposure to community-based healthcare. This positions the school not as an isolated academic facility, but as part of critical health infrastructure—expanding access to medical services in Peel Region.

Above the clinic, highly flexible classrooms support multiple teaching configurations, accommodating in-person, hybrid, and asynchronous learning. Case-based learning labs, the hybrid anatomy lab, and high- and low-fidelity simulation spaces support TMU's experiential learning approach for its 94 undergraduate and 105 postgraduate students.

Connected directly to the atrium, the library offers quiet and collaborative study environments, alongside additional informal learning spaces. A round room dedicated to Indigenous smudging ceremonies and smaller gatherings anchors this area, offering an

important place of reflection and cultural practice within the school community.

Throughout the building, the design strategically leverages the building's original terraced structure to maximize access to natural light for learning and event spaces, while locating digitally focused environments deeper into the floor plan as central hubs for student activities.

In repurposing the former Bramalea Civic Centre, TMU's new School of Medicine demonstrates how existing civic infrastructure can be reimagined to meet evolving community needs. By bringing medical education, clinical care, and public gathering spaces together under one roof, the project positions the building as both a place of learning and an essential piece of community health infrastructure in Peel Region.

"This building reflects the vision behind the TMU School of Medicine—a place where learning, collaboration, and community come together," says Mohamed Lachemi, President and Vice-Chancellor, Toronto Metropolitan University. *"It's a beautiful and thoughtfully designed environment that encourages curiosity, connection, and hands-on learning for our students, while remaining open and welcoming to the community around it. Spaces like this help shape the kind of physicians we hope to graduate: skilled, compassionate, and deeply connected to the people they serve."*

Phase Two of TMU's School of Medicine will see the completion of the north wing which will house academic research spaces and administrative offices for the Dean and faculty. Designed to support evolving hybrid working models, the workplace incorporates flexible layouts and adaptable furnishings that accommodate both focused work and collaborative activity. It will connect to Phase One via an informal shared space with lounge seating and a student-run internal herb garden will further contribute to well-being and cultural exchange.



About Diamond Schmitt

Diamond Schmitt is a global architecture firm that designs transformative and highly sustainable buildings. Through a collaborative, research-driven process, the firm creates innovative architecture that empowers people, communities, and organizations to harness change for the greater public good. With offices in Toronto, Vancouver, and New York, the firm has designed leading spaces for research and education, including the University of British Columbia's BioSciences Complex and the Peter Gilgan Centre for Research and Learning at the Hospital for Sick Children—known for their excellent laboratories, versatile planning, and striking design. Current projects include the Myron and Berna Garron Health Sciences Complex at the University of Toronto Scarborough Campus, the Temerty Faculty of Medicine's new James and Louise Temerty Building at the University of Toronto, and the Clinical Support and Research Centre at St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver.

For more information please visit: <https://dsai.ca>

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