

# A SHOO-IN FOR SUSTAINABILITY

An old Czechoslovakian shoe factory is now a sustainably designed, award-winning 47-unit residential building.

**BUILD WITH  
STRENGTH**



## Bata Shoe Factory

Batawa, Ontario, Canada

Two hours east of Toronto on the Trent River sits the town of Batawa which was founded in 1939 by Czechoslovakian immigrants, Thomas and Sonja Bata. The heart of Batawa was the Bata Shoe Factory, which employed nearly 2,000 people in its' heyday. Now more than 80 years later, the factory is supporting locals once again after being converted into 47 high-end residential units available for rent.

### 01. A familiar foundation.

Retaining the original concrete structure allowed architects to save nearly 80 percent of the embodied carbon that would factor into a conversion of this scale.

### 02. Solidifying beauty with concrete.

12-foot ceilings come courtesy of the original waffle slab structure, an architectural innovation the Batas brought over from Europe. Bringing the project into today and beyond, architects turned to Modernist touches like brick masonry, floor-to-ceiling glass, steel, and timber, with timber and terrazzo carrying into the interiors.

### 03. A collaborative effort.

BDP Quadrangle firm was the architect of record while Dubbeldam Architecture + Design, was hired as a collaborating firm and together they prioritized sustainable energy performance and materials where possible. Details like an airtight building envelope, an HVAC system powered by geothermal energy, carpet tiles made from recycled fishing nets, and low-VOC finishes helped the project win a Canadian Green Building Award.

### 04. A study in sustainability.

The Bata Factory is model for environmental and social sustainability. By increasing housing density in a rural setting with the lightest impact on the environment, the project has tapped into great potential for Batawa. Collaborating architect Heather Dubbeldam is confident that "The renovated factory now stands to once again become a beacon within the town, focused on a sustainable future."

