

Visit 40 Oaks this weekend

See it for yourself.

The white-painted chairs at 40 Oaks, the carved wooden doors, wall art and recycled, reinvigorated furnishings – all the Public Displays of Affection-inspired arts and design are on display to the public this coming weekend.

Part of the Toronto Offsite Design Festival, PDA is throwing open the doors of 40 Oaks on Friday, Jan. 27 (6 p.m. to 10 p.m.), Saturday, Jan. 28 and Sunday Jan. 29 (1 p.m. to 6 p.m.)

The members of PDA will

how beautiful things don't have to be either expensive or intimidating.

"We want to get our design approach out there in the real world," says PDA founder Patimal Gosal. "And we want feedback from the public."

A highlight of Sunday is a panel discussion on the role of community engagement art and design in architecture and urban planning. The panel features architect Jana Levitt, urban strategist Ken Greenberg and Zahra Ebrahim of OCAD.

Getting the word out about 40 Oaks

Funding and furnishing a five-storey, 87-unit building has been a modern-day miracle that involved hundreds of people helping in almost as many ways.

But finding these people was never the hard part.

And one of the most valuable tools for recruiting volunteers and soliciting financial and in-kind donations has been www.40oaks.com.

Designed by Profis Com-

munications and paid for entirely by B2B Trust, the website has been a go-to information destination almost from the beginning.

"Communication has been key to our success and B2B recognized that early on," says Ann MacDiarmid, co-chair of the volunteer 40 Oaks furnishing committee.

"Supporting initiatives that bring about affordable housing and assistance to

those in need is so important and fundamental to building strong, vibrant communities, says Susi McCord, senior vice-president of marketing and distribution at B2B and former board member of the CRC.

"40 Oaks is making a difference to the residents of Regent Park and B2B Trust is proud to support its noble cause."

2013

The Toronto Sun ■ TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2012

40 Oaks

40 Oaks at the top of Regent Street

Regent Park is Canada's oldest and largest social housing community. Here are some facts about the area prior to changes brought about through phases of revitalization:

- Was built in 1949 as a "garden city" with very little commercial activity
- Had no through streets; therefore, no access for emergency vehicles, police or visitors
- There were six elementary schools, but no high schools because in 1949 residents were not expected to go on to high school
- Became home to 2,083 households and more than 8,300 residents
- 90 languages are spoken in the neighbourhood; 73% of the adult residents are underemployed
- Of residents, 12% have Ca-

ndian university degrees and 63% have university degrees from outside Canada

• 100% of the Regent Park community lived in poverty, including more than 5,000 children.

Six phases of the Regent Park revitalization began in 2006, and included changes such as:

• Streets being designed and reopened; sidewalks are being built throughout.

• The opening of four major retail outlets in 2009. Tim Hortons, Rogers, Royal Bank and Fresh Co (Sobey's) are providing employment and commerce within the community

• In addition to Toronto Community Housing apartments with Rent Geared to Income (RGI), and market priced housing, Regent Park is becoming a mixed-income

community with a blend of affordable housing and market-priced housing

• The new Regent Park will

include an Arts and Culture Centre, an indoor swimming pool, community gardens and a community hub

at 40 Oaks that will provide space for other not-for-profit agencies and opportunities for collaboration among the

agencies to ensure effective resources are provided to the community.

• 40 Oaks is located at 40 Oak Street in the very heart of Phase 1 of the Regent Park revitalization providing 87 units of deeply affordable housing, a community meal programme serving hot meals daily and a "community living" room where all people are welcomed, valued and respected.

40 Oaks is a project of the Christian Resource Centre (CRC).

