



ADAM SYKES PHOTO

Parkwood Residences will be an integral part of downtown Oshawa's rejuvenation. The 1,074-square-foot Valleyview model suite offers a commanding view, two bedrooms and a den.

## Oshawa

# First condo in 20 years brings life downtown

BY TRACY HANES  
TORONTO STAR

Today's launch of Oshawa's first new residential condo in more than 20 years is serving to kick-start downtown revitalization.

Parkwood Residences, by Atria Developments, will comprise 120 suites in a 10-storey tower and a connected six-storey gallery. The former office building on Bond St. between Prince and Centre Sts., which housed a courthouse and government offices, had been abandoned for nearly a decade. Its steel superstructure and concreteform the skeleton for the condo, with the

rest being new construction.

Oshawa economic development officer Dave Pearce says he had showed the building to many potential buyers over the years in vain, until Atria's Hans Jain came on the scene.

"We've been doing this (bringing vitality) for years in neighbourhoods that were neglected," says Jain, who operates Atria with his father, Gyan (John), and his brothers, Ravi and Vip.

The elder Jain immigrated to Canada from India in 1964 and purchased land in Oshawa. That investment became the founda-

tion for the family business. The company specializes in transforming vacated urban buildings into condominium residences and commercial facilities. Among its projects is i-Zone live/work lofts at Queen and Carlaw (see article above).

"Atria" means opening the sky and letting in the light. And the light is one of Jain's favourite aspects of Parkwood Residences.

"On a clear day, you can see Lake Ontario and when it's sunny, the light is beautiful," he says, taking in the view.

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## Rebirth of downtown has begun

► **Downtown** From R1

Jain heard about the Oshawa site from a family friend — a real estate agent — who believed it was an ideal fit for Atria.

"I was wowed by the physical structure, the ceiling heights and the phenomenal views," he says. "A building speaks to you. And the support of the council and the community has been tremendous."

He says the units cost about \$180 per square foot. In Toronto, a similar project would run in the \$300 range.

While Jain's consultants agreed it was a great building, they pointed to the risk of making a debut in a non-existent condo market and in the downtown core.

But Jain believes the project will be a winner, pointing out that the booming growth in Whitby and Ajax is bound to sweep east into Oshawa.

And the city is home not only to a major employer (the largest General Motors plant in North America with 15,000 employees), a new university (Ontario Institute of Technology) is under construction adjacent to Durham College, which is also undergoing expansion. And work continues on a new \$100-million cancer centre at Lakeridge Health Centre.

Downtown is going through a renaissance. A YMCA opened a few years ago, the historic Regent Theatre is being renovated to serve as a 750-seat performing arts centre and a \$30-million sports and entertainment complex, which will be home to the Ontario

### The downtown Regent Theatre is being renovated to serve as a performing arts centre and a \$30-million sports complex is planned

Hockey League's Oshawa Generals, is slated for construction just a few blocks away from Parkwood Residences.

The closing of the GenOsh Hotel, a rundown watering hole, has further helped rehabilitate downtown's image.

The area is already home to the Robert McLaughlin Art Gallery and events such as Art in the Park and the Jazz & Blues Festival. It also has one of the largest private medical clinics in Canada, where many medical specialists work. And Lakeview Park at the foot of Simcoe St. is one of the loveliest pieces of the Waterfront Trail in the GTA.

"Oshawa is on a bit of a roll these days," says Pearce. "And this condo project will be a real catalyst for the downtown revitalization. We're behind Hans 100 per cent. This is a real opportunity. It's fantastic."

Councillor Cathy Clark says the council has realized for some time that creating residential density is the key to rejuvenating the downtown.

"We had been approving some smaller scale residential project, such as apartments above stores, but to get something with this kind of momentum is wonderful," she says.

"There are a lot of office workers downtown during the day, but the key to keeping it alive at night is to have people living here who will use the neighbourhood restaurants and shops."

Jain has spent numerous hours in Oshawa getting to know the city and the downtown community. And he toured a lot of existing condos in Oshawa and Whitby to see what was already around.

Parkwood Residences have



been designed to provide functional space and to take advantage of the views.

The building is named in honour of Parkwood Estate, which lies minutes north along Simcoe St., and was the home of General Motors of Canada founder R.S. McLaughlin. It's open to the public and is used frequently for movie and television shoots.

Units range in size from 476 to 1,168 square feet, priced from \$99,900 to \$200,000. They include one-bedroom, one-bedroom-plus-den, two-bedroom and two-bedroom-plus-den suites.

Standar features include nine-foot ceilings, a balcony, terrace or French balcony, Shaker-style cabinets and breakfast bars, premium appliances, soaker tubs, stainless steel levered door handles, pre-wiring for Internet and cable and porcelain tiles. Hardwood flooring is available as an upgrade.

There will be 64 suites in the tower and 56 in the gallery.

Condo fees will be about 20 cents per square foot. As well, gas, water and hydro will be metered individually for each unit.

The building's amenities include indoor parking, party room, exercise room and rooftop terrace with barbecue facilities.

One of the most unusual features is the limited number of private rooftop terraces available for residents to purchase for \$11,000 each. The 175-square-foot terraces will appeal to residents who want to have a garden or personal barbecue area.

As a retrofit, the Parkwood Residences does not qualify for coverage under the Tarrion Warranty Corporation (formerly Ontario New Home Warranty Program). But Atria is offering a one-year limited warranty on the units.

There are two furnished model suites by Fleur-de-lis Interior Design, including the 581-square-foot, one-bedroom Baker and the 1,074-square-foot, two-bedroom-plus-den Valleyview. Both suites have sweeping views of downtown Oshawa.

Occupancy will begin in January.

Jain says he believes the condos will attract a range of buyers, from local residents wanting to downsize to young people looking to buy their first home.

He has had inquiries from Toronto and as far away as Hamilton.

The GO bus station is directly across the street and the train station is a brief ride south. Several express trains run daily, taking commuters to Union Station in 45 minutes.

The sales centre and model suites open today on the ninth floor of Parkwood Residences at 44 Bond St. W. Hours are noon to 5 p.m. Mondays and Tuesdays, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Wednesdays and weekends and holidays.

It's closed Thursdays and Fridays.

For more information, call 905-404-1400 or visit the Web site at [www.parkwoodresidences.com](http://www.parkwoodresidences.com).



RENDERING COURTESY OF ATRIA DEVELOPMENTS

Parkwood Residences, shown here in a rendering, will take up an entire block in downtown Oshawa. Buyers can live in the 10-storey tower or six-storey gallery and have the option of buying a private rooftop terrace for \$11,000. At left is the view looking east along Bond St. from the Valleyview model suite. The project is being heralded as a catalyst for the rejuvenation of the city's core.