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REVITALIZED SPACE

TTC barns officially re-open

After eight years and a \$21.1-million investment, the **Artscape Wychwood Barns** project officially opened, Thursday.

“It’s the capping off of an eight year-long process with many twists and turns and ups and downs,” said Artscape president and CEO **Tim Jones**.

“It has taken a lot of vision but equal amounts of tenacity and hard work to pull these things off. It’s an incredible relief to be at this point.”

The historic Wychwood TTC streetcar repair barns are located in the St. Clair and Christie neighbourhood and Jones said he only recently learned that they were slated to be demolished within two weeks of the permit being granted, it was saved by local residents many years ago.

In recent years, the organization known for revitalizing forgotten spaces and turning them into havens for artists, has taken on the barns, which have been unused since the mid-1980s, and turned a vision into a reality.

The redeveloped barns, designed by lead consultant and architect **du Toit Architects Ltd.**, each have a purpose:

- Studio barn—26 live/work studios and 15 work-only studios to professional artists;
- Covered street barn—affordable community-use space for events, exhibitions etc.;
- Community barn—affordable meeting space for arts and environmental organizations and 13 offices;
- Green barn—to be operated by **The Stop Community Food Centre** with a weekly farmer’s market and will house a year-round greenhouse and sheltered garden.

There is also a 127,000-square-foot park surrounding the barns on three sides developed by the city’s parks, forestry and recreation department with a children’s play area, natural ice rink and picnic tables.

Other development partners include: **The Dalton Company Ltd.**, **Blackwell Bowick Partnership Ltd.**, **Stantec Consulting Ltd.**, **The Planning Partnership** and **E.R.A. Architects Inc.**

The project is aiming to be the first LEED-certified heritage building in Canada with its heating and cooling drawn from the earth’s energy, toilets flushing with rainwater and other green technologies in practice.

The **Canadian Urban Institute** awarded the Artscape Wychwood Barns with one of its annual Brownie Awards this year and it was presented to the team at the official opening celebration, where a turnout of about 1,000 people was expected.