



Julie Slack | May 10, 2010 - 4:48 PM | 1

Living wall takes root

A living wall of willows was planted today along Rathburn Rd. E. thanks to a \$15,000 grant that aims to "preserve and protect the Canadian environment."

Mississauga was one of 20 communities chosen to receive the grant from the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation and Tree Canada.

The 100-metre-long natural sound barrier runs along the south side of Rathburn Rd., east of Tomken Rd. It will back onto Uxbridge Lane.

It will cost almost \$100,000 to install the trees, said Raymond Lau, an infrastructure programmer at the City of Mississauga.

However, the trees are easy to grow, will never rot, have a more-than 50-year life cycle and need no painting or maintenance except the occasional trim.

Lau said the willows will absorb noise rather than deflect it the way normal concrete barriers do. They are an environmentally-friendly alternative to other noise attenuation barrier products because they provide the additional benefit of absorbing carbon dioxide, a cause of global warming. And, trees will remain graffiti free.

Mississauga is the first municipality in Ontario to purchase and install such a living wall.

The City of Mississauga was one of 110 municipalities, Business Improvement Associations and First Nations communities to apply for the grant. The successful applicants were announced last week.

"The Living Wall blends nature and engineering to form a sound barrier that complements the environment," said Councillor George Carlson, Chair of the City's Environmental Advisory Committee. "Options like these are creative solutions and improve the quality of life in our city."

jslack@mississauga.net



Wall of willows. Anthony Biglieri and Josef Scholbeck of The Living Wall project get dirty putting up panels of a noise attenuation barrier along Rathburn Rd. E. at Uxbridge Lane today. The wall is made of trees. *Staff photo by Fred Loek*

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