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Julie Slack | May 05, 2010 - 9:14 AM |  1

Willow wall will save us

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

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

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



Wall of willows. An east Mississauga community is getting a protective wall of willows similar to this one thanks to a \$15,000 grant from the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation and Tree Canada. *Submitted photo*

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."

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