

Living wall provides green barrier between homes and traffic

The City of Edmonton has launched a demonstration project in Mill Woods called a living wall. The innovative design uses earth, wood and willow shrubs to create a low cost, graffiti free, environmentally friendly and aesthetically pleasing barrier between homes and traffic.



"This is a first for western Canada, so we want to observe and test the wall through four seasons to determine its effectiveness," says Drainage Services Project Manager Diane Wirtz. "In Europe and eastern Canada, living walls in cold climates have proven effective."

The one-year pilot is being done in conjunction with a flood mitigation project planned for Tweddle Place in Mill Woods. Drainage Services plans to build a large stormwater pond along the east side of 91 Street between Mill Woods Road and the Whitemud Drive. This will require removal and replacement of the existing berm. The demonstration project will see 100 metres of the berm removed and replaced with the living wall.

"It's important to us that we replace the berm with a barrier that is as good as or better than what we have now," says Wirtz, "but also to give the community something that blends with the environment and has many advantages over more traditional walls made of concrete, wood or steel."

A final decision about using the wall as a permanent replacement for the 91 Street berm – and for future opportunities in the city – will be made in 2015. Evaluation will include gathering input from area residents about their own observations and views through an on-line survey and other methods.

For more information:

Visit edmonton.ca/livingwall

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