

PLANNERS GET PLANTING

Urban Strategies staff garden on Spadina

Urban Strategies Inc. staff decided that they could no longer bare the sight of the trees struggling through the concrete out in front of their office on Spadina Avenue, and took to the street Wednesday to help free them from their concrete casings— adding some colour to the busy street along the way.

Urban Strategies along with **Montgomery Sisam Architects** (tenants at 197 Spadina Avenue) convinced the city’s urban forestry division to remove the concrete bases that enclosed the trees, replace them with a layer of mulch and replace dead trees along a three-block stretch on the east side of Spadina Avenue, north of Queen Street West. By removing the bases, it is hoped that the trees will have better access to water, which will improve their overall health.

After the city did the heavy lifting, it was up to the planners to take care of the rest. More than 20 staff from Urban Strategies and Montgomery Sisam dug, planted and mulched their way up the street leaving a trail of brightly coloured gardens surrounding the trees— the firms filled the gardens with kale and chrysanthemums and plan to plant perennials in the spring. They also have agreed to maintain the gardens for the next five years.

The efforts have not gone unnoticed by pedestrians, some of whom took the time to tell the planners/gardeners what they thought.

“People have stopped to tell us that it looks fantastic and it brings a smile to people’s faces,” said Urban

Strategies partner **George Dark**. He added that the project “softens the city. Spadina is big and wide and has a lot of pavement in it and a little bit of green isn’t going to hurt anyone.”

Dark believes that businesses in areas such as Spadina have to step up and take the initiative in improving the area.

“It is up to the people who live in this



Before



After

NRU Photos

“It is up to the people who live in this neighbourhood all day to do this sort of stuff, so we’ll go ahead do it ourselves. You don’t have to wait for the city to do everything.”

- George Dark

neighbourhood all day to do this sort of stuff, so we’ll go ahead do it ourselves. You don’t have to wait for the city to do everything.”

Urban Strategies hopes that other businesses along Spadina will join in.

“At the end of next year we will all take stock of how well this program has worked and decide how best to extend and improve it,” said Urban Strategies partner **Joe Berridge**. “We hope other firms will adopt additional sections of Spadina, in particular from Queen to King.”•

RFP #2006-008 FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES TO DEVELOP A STRATEGIC PRESENTATION TO THE BIE FOR THE TORONTO 2015 WORLD EXPO BID

Details will be on the EXPO Section TEDCO website at www.tedco.ca

RFP will close on **Tuesday November 7 at 12 noon**

**TORONTO2015
WORLD EXPO**

