

Meijer Partners with Plaster Creek Stewards for Sustainable Stormwater Management

At Meijer, we understand that to be a good company, we must be a good neighbor. We integrate environmental sustainability into our daily operations, not only because it makes good business sense, but because it aligns with our values and mission of enriching lives in the communities we serve.

Meijer has partnered with [Plaster Creek Stewards](#) (PCS) for sustainability projects in the past, and joined the group again last fall to help ensure sustainable stormwater management solutions around our supercenter at 28th Street and Kalamazoo Ave. in Grand Rapids, Mich., as well as the new gas station being built on the adjacent corner.

PCS is an initiative of Calvin University, working in partnership with the community to restore health and beauty to the Plaster Creek Watershed through research, education, engagement and ecological restoration practices. The organization had previously established several pollinator gardens and stormwater rain gardens on the property Meijer intended to redevelop. In alignment with its focus on sustainability, Meijer chose to continue this initiative on the property and expand it to the existing store property.

Volunteers from Meijer worked with Plaster Creek Stewards to remove the native plants from the new Meijer property to ensure they weren't damaged during the demolition of the previous building and construction of the new gas station.

"Water is our most precious natural resource, so it's important to protect and preserve the areas around our stores to minimize our impact," said Erik Petrovskis, Meijer Director of Environmental Compliance and Sustainability. "This project was a great way to ensure that we are protecting the watershed around our existing store and new gas station while beautifying the property and saving native plants all at the same time."

The team transplanted them to our store property to replenish rain gardens with these native plants, which also help contribute to sustainable stormwater drainage. The Plaster Creek Stewards will continue to maintain these replanted gardens and expand the effort to six locations at the store and several areas on the remodeled gas station property once construction is complete.

"Plaster Creek Stewards is grateful to partner with Meijer on this project, which reduces pollution and flooding in Plaster Creek by capturing water flowing off of the parking lot and absorbing it with deep-rooted native plants," said Haley Kornoelje, PCS project coordinator. "Everyone can do something to protect local waterways, and we're grateful for how Meijer has stepped up to play their part in our watershed. Clean water and healthy communities go hand in hand."

The Plaster Creek watershed covers about 58 square miles in metropolitan Grand Rapids, and the creek itself is about 27 miles long. Plaster Creek's headwaters originate south and east of Grand Rapids, with tributaries coming from agricultural areas around Dutton and Caledonia. The creek flows through commercial and residential areas of the city, and finally through industrial areas and neighborhoods before emptying into the Grand River south of downtown Grand Rapids. An open channel tributary to Plaster Creek called the Burton-Breton county drain runs through the new Meijer gas station property. The Meijer supercenter is about a quarter mile from the main body of Plaster Creek in Ken-O-Sha Park.

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