

Cheboygan's new rain garden helps filter stormwater

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CHEBOYGAN — Last week, volunteers worked together to clear a space in Water Street Parking Lot and plant a rain garden full of native plants to help filter stormwater.

On Wednesday, June 2, city residents and volunteers, along with representatives from the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council, cleared the area on the north side of the public restrooms in the parking lot. Then, on Friday, June 4, more volunteers planted native plant species in the area that had been prepared for the plants.

"The rain garden is a wonderful addition to downtown Cheboygan," said Cheboygan Main Street and Downtown Development Authority Interim



Volunteers and residents of the City of Cheboygan and representatives from the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council worked together last Friday afternoon to plant a rain garden in the Water Street parking lot. KORTNY HAHN/CHEBOYGAN DAILY TRIBUNE

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Garden

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Director Katie Duczkowski. "It's a step in the right direction towards protecting our waterways. A big thank you to everyone who helped to complete this project."

This project was completed through a partnership between the City of Cheboygan, Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council and The Native Edge, a landscaping company that specializes in gardens

such as the one done in Cheboygan. The garden was funded by a Great Lakes Commission's Emerging Green Champions Mini-Grant and the Erb Family Foundation.

At several previous workshops the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council hosted for city residents, the Cheboygan River and the inland waterways were identified as areas of concern and priority when it came to protecting the natural resources. At those workshops, city residents also learned how to capture rain water in barrels for use with other plants and how to

create green stormwater infrastructure in their community.

One of the most common pollutants of the waterways is stormwater runoff after heavy rains. The rain washes pesticides and fertilizers into the water if there is no buffer zone, such as plants, to help disperse the water.

Plant species referred to as "native plants" have deep roots, allowing water after heavy rains to soak into the ground and spread out, slowing it down before the excess runs into the waterways. This helps to control the

runoff of the pollutants into the water.

"The Main Street DDA looks forward to incorporating more native species in to future landscaping projects downtown," said Duczkowski. "Anyone interested in getting involved with future Main Street DDA projects or events please reach out to me at kduczowski@cheboygan.org."

Duczowski said the clean rivers and lakes are important natural resources in the city, and the city and its residents need to do what they can to help protect those resources.