

# WATER STREET COMMONS

## THE NATIVE PRAIRIE

This prairie was planted by the community on May 1, 2013, after a successful fundraising campaign made the purchase of native seeds and other materials possible. Over 3,000 seed balls, containing 8 species of native grasses and 27 species of flowering plants, were made by local school children and volunteers, and launched onto the site by way of slingshots and homemade catapults. Additionally, over a hundred young wildflowers and grasses were hand-planted throughout the summer. This meadow is maintained by members of the community, like yourself. We hope you enjoy your time here and come back often.

## WHY NATIVE PLANTS ARE IMPORTANT

With a variety of bloom times and color, a diverse native planting can add year-round texture and interest to any space. As part of a biological community, native plantings provide necessary habitat and sources of food for insect and animal populations. Tallgrass prairies in Michigan are known to support a biodiverse group of animals including the red fox, goldfinches, and red-tailed hawks.

With an increasingly variable climate, native plants may have a greater ability to withstand prolonged conditions of drought, allowing for reduced maintenance once the plants are established. Additionally, tallgrass prairies allow for greater water infiltration and soil stability thanks to deep and spreading root systems. This reduces the burden placed on an already stressed stormwater system, reducing the flashiness of flood events.

## TO LEARN MORE

For a full list of plant species, as well as information on how you can assist with local conservation and restoration efforts, please visit

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