



Price Chopper is building a network of EV charging stations at its supermarkets



Photo credit: Energetics

SNAPSHOT

EV Charging Equipment

Two or three Level 2 stations per site at multiple stores

Location

Lake Placid, Latham, Niskayuna, Plattsburgh, Queensbury, Saratoga Springs, Slingerlands, and Warwick, NY

EV Users

Retail; stations are available to all visitors

This project was initiated by an enthusiastic local planning board, which represented a progressive and inquisitive community. The board believed the technology could “come into the community and advance a green agenda and differentiate the community.” Price Chopper is seeking to build “the most densely networked electric vehicle (EV) charging station ecosystem on the East Coast, providing free charge to users until such a time as sustainable EV proliferation has been achieved.”

What they did

The EV charging stations were installed at different store locations starting in early 2014, with further installations planned. Their stores tend to be near transportation corridors and are typically spaced based on population density, which makes them logical locations to establish a network of charging stations. Price Chopper also has many shopping plaza locations that include other retail businesses, indicating an opportunity for shared charging strategies.

Support and results

The stations are maintained by Price Chopper as they typically own and control their parking lots, giving the company the ability to test different priority strategies. For example, the chain has tried “new mom with baby” parking, as well as fuel-efficient vehicle spaces. While Price Chopper received Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) sustainable site credits for the fuel-efficient vehicle spaces, consumers pushed back against this initiative, stating that premium spots designated for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and “new mom” patrons were already being underutilized. Nearly all parking at Price Chopper locations is provided free of charge in surface lots.

ChargeNY accelerates the use of plug-in electric vehicles on the road by making infrastructure such as charging stations more available, easier to use, and more economically viable in New York State.

Lessons learned from this project included a better understanding of factors that effect the location, use, and benefits of charging station installations. Turnover rates in retail parking lots affect a store's viability and profitability. The layout and dimensions of lots affect feasibility, and to a degree, a balance between long dwell times and higher turnover rates is weighed. Some stores feature cafes or bank locations, lengthening dwell time. Price Chopper felt their supermarket in Niskayuna could benefit from EV charging stations to differentiate them from competitors while bringing new development in a way that feels dynamic while embracing core community values. Price Chopper's initial charging station installation design included a solar panel array to offset electricity usage and draw attention to the charging stations, but management ultimately decided that it was more valuable to install stations at more locations, which was more cost-effective without the solar panel array. Supermarkets are considered critical infrastructure by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and as such, the agency requires that stores be regionally deployed in a strategic manner similar to fire stations. The regularity created by this designation, combined with the known location strategy/business model for the stores themselves, could make food stores key in placing accessible and visible EV charging stations in locations that relate to both population centers and transportation corridors.

Get started

Visit nyserdera.ny.gov/ChargeNY or call **1-866-NYSERDA** to learn how you can reduce your energy consumption and costs.



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