

**For Immediate Release**

**Giffels Webster Comprehensive Plan Garners National Recognition for City of Brighton**

*American Planning Association's STaR Division Honors City of Brighton Comprehensive Plan*

**DETROIT** – April 15, 2019 – [Giffels Webster](#), a consulting firm specializing in community planning, infrastructure and land development solutions for public, private and institutional clients, garnered national recognition by the American Planning Association (APA) for developing the City of Brighton's Comprehensive Plan.

The municipality received the **2019 Vernon Deines Merit Award for an Outstanding Small Town Comprehensive Plan** from the APA's Small Town and Rural Planning (STaR) division. The [City of Brighton's Comprehensive Plan](#), implemented in 2018, provides an update to the city's 2012 Master Plan while incorporating a Downtown Plan, Recreation Plan and Complete Streets Plan.

To develop this Comprehensive Plan, Giffels Webster worked with the city of Brighton's City Council, Planning Commission, and Downtown Development Authority (DDA) to establish five overarching goals for the community, including the following categories: Quality and Variety of Housing, Community Identity, Environmental Stewardship, Infrastructure and Civic Spaces, and Economic Development.

"Brighton's Comprehensive Plan includes long-term sustainability strategies and addresses many issues that challenge other small towns striving to improve residents' quality of life with limited resources," said Jill Bahm, partner at Giffels Webster. "The plan includes strategies for incremental improvements that can be made by both the public and private sectors and illustrates how certain actions can effect positive changes in more than one plan."

The Comprehensive Plan is a planning tool designed to help the community take strategic steps to improve its residential neighborhoods, add housing for existing and new residents, strengthen its downtown, offer ample recreation opportunities, and enhance overall economic development throughout the community.

**Giffels Webster Technology Brings Plan to Life**

In developing the Downtown Plan, Giffels Webster used its [Next Steps for Downtown<sup>®</sup>](#) process, which identifies what's working and what needs work in the downtown, incorporates short-term and long-range strategies, and uses colorful graphics to portray planning concepts.

The project was informed by public input obtained through public meetings, an open house, electronic survey and [PictureThis!™](#), Giffels Webster's online, interactive, GIS-based platform that encourages participants to upload photos of features and places they like or want to see improved. These approaches were recognized by APA's STaR

Division, which is composed of planners who advocate for community partnerships and collaborations that address the physical, social, and economic diversity of North America's nonmetropolitan areas.

“As a small city, our staff is routinely challenged to serve the community in a variety of capacities,” said Nate Geinzer, city manager for the city of Brighton. “This document helps us stay focused and really raises awareness of how short- and long-range land use decisions impact neighborhoods, downtown, and commercial and industrial corridors, along with our transportation network and recreation areas. This plan gives us a clear path to making the planning concepts and strategies a reality.”

### **Putting the Plan into Action**

The city of Brighton has wasted no time in implementing key zoning strategies. It recently adopted new form-based zoning standards to encourage new housing types near downtown, one of the most important goals of the Comprehensive Plan that supports both existing residents and downtown businesses. The new zoning standards reflect the city’s commitment to this plan, and offer an approach that other communities should consider following.

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### **About Giffels Webster**

Giffels Webster is a collection of people — civil engineers, landscape architects, planners, GIS specialists and surveyors — who choose every day to make communities better. The Michigan-based firm serves public, private and institutional clients throughout the United States with their community planning, infrastructure and land development needs.

Since its inception in 1952, Giffels Webster has evolved to offer a broad scope of services centered on helping clients achieve their project or programming goals, including civil engineering, municipal consulting, planning, land development consulting, landscape architecture, traffic engineering, and GIS data creation and management. For more information, visit [giffelswebster.com](http://giffelswebster.com).

### **About the City of Brighton**

The city of Brighton is located in Livingston County, Michigan, with easy access to the cities of Lansing, Detroit and Ann Arbor. The city has a population of approximately 7,600 people in an area covering 3.7 square miles. Questions about the city of Brighton may be directed to the city manager, Nate Geinzer, at 810.225.8022.

### **About the American Planning Association’s Small Town and Rural Planning Division**

American Planning Association’s Small Town and Rural Planning Division strives to improve planning in small communities and rural areas through its membership. The division's work focuses on protecting natural resources and increasing technical

services to planning commissioners. It strives to strengthen communications among small town and rural planners, as well as with those in more urbanized areas.