



## WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP ADOPTS GIFFELS WEBSTER'S CLEARZONING PLANNING TOOL

MARCH 13, 2019

Detroit — Giffels Webster, a Michigan-based consulting firm specializing in infrastructure, community planning and land development solutions for public, private and institutional clients, welcomed Washington Township, Mich., as the second Macomb County community to adopt its Clearzoning planning tool for local zoning ordinances.

“Giffels Webster’s Clearzoning product enhances customer service and improves the accessibility and visual presentation of zoning ordinances. The easy-to-follow format can assist in attracting more economic development since zoning information is available even when the Township’s offices are closed,” said Rod Arroyo, partner and director of Community Planning at Giffels Webster. “It sends a clearer picture and positive message to residents, local business owners and those interested in the development of the Township.”

The new Washington Township zoning ordinance includes an interactive zoning map, created by Giffels Webster’s Geographic Information System (GIS) staff, which links parcel data directly to the corresponding zoning district requirements in the zoning ordinance. The Washington Township Board of Trustees voted to adopt the digital tool following a unanimous recommendation from the Planning Commission.

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“We are pleased to have implemented Clearzoning as a means of making it more convenient and transparent for residents and businesses to understand our planning and zoning requirements,” said Dan O’Leary, Township Supervisor, Charter Township of Washington. “We believe this will help all of us work together to keep Washington a beautiful community.”

To date, the tool has had far-reaching benefits for other municipalities, including communities in southeast Michigan, along with others in Colorado, Louisiana, Ohio and West Virginia.

“Our interactive map is a huge step up from paper maps and pairing it with the Clearzoning tool has been transformational. The Giffels Webster staff did a great job training us, and it’s helped flatten the learning curve for managing zoning ordinances amongst all of our departments,” said Glenn Wynn, planning director for Shelby Township, Michigan. “The process is less overwhelming, so people are using the ordinance more, and we don’t have to worry about tearing pages or losing detail with the digital format.”

Breathing new life into online versions of municipal zoning codes, Clearzoning reformats codes into a user-friendly, understandable format with color graphics, links to key information and searchable works and terms.

This format makes it easier for residents, business owners, real estate developers and public officials to quickly access important zoning information and easily understand zoning codes often thought to be confusing and intimidating. The Clearzoning tool makes development codes Clear and Connected.

## **An easy transition**

Switching to a digital format starts with a zoning audit of the municipal zoning code by Giffels Webster’s team of experts. Then, the team identifies and fixes incorrect cross-references, duplicative language and inconsistent text, and identifies changes in regulations, new case law and industry best practices. Once in place, the Giffels Webster team trains new users to help them get the most from the digital format.

<https://cseengineermag.com/washington-township-adopts-giffels-websters-clearzoning-planning-tool/>