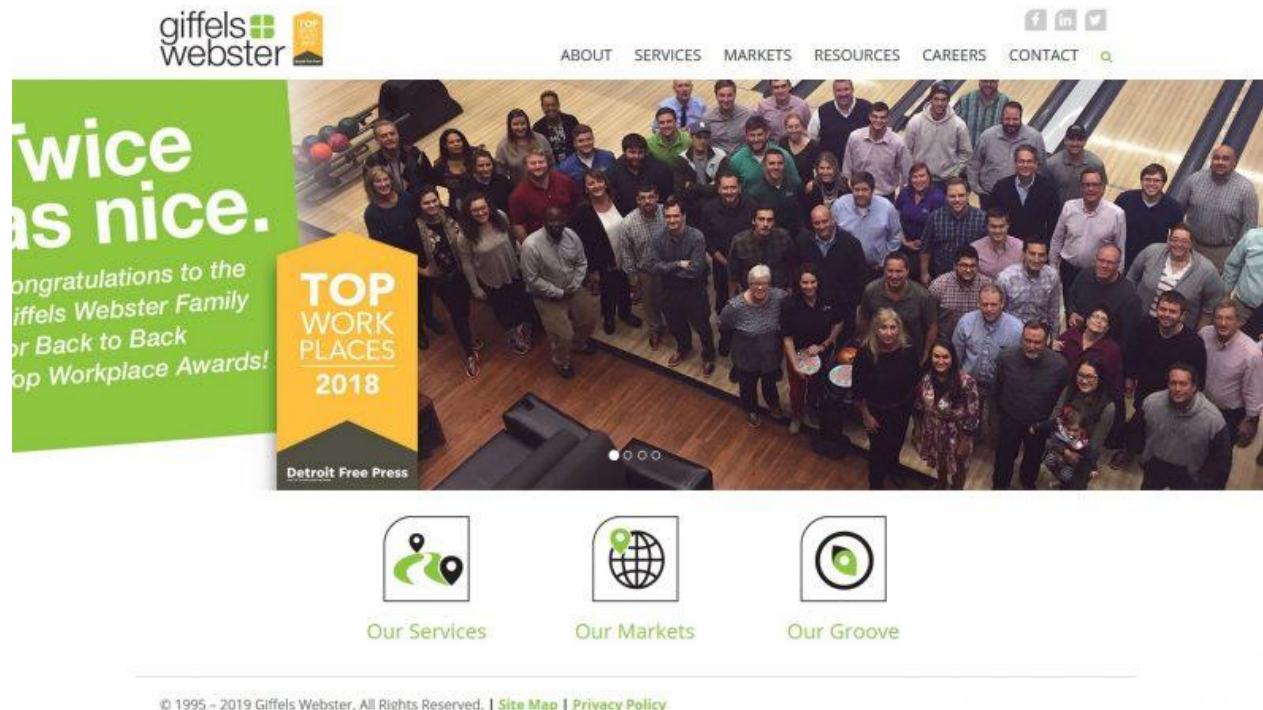


American Planning Association STaR Division honors Brighton Comprehensive Plan

Posted on [April 15, 2019](#) by [Matt Roush](#)



DETROIT—The city of Brighton has received the 2019 Vernon Deines Merit Award for an Outstanding Small Town Comprehensive Plan from the American Planning Association’s Small Town and Rural (STaR) Division for its Comprehensive Plan, which was developed by Giffels Webster, a Detroit-based consulting firm offering community planning, infrastructure, and land development services.

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 Brighton’s City Council, Planning Commission, and Downtown Development Authority (DDA) to establish five overarching goals for the community: 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 plan is 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.

In developing the Downtown Plan, Giffels Webster used its [Next Steps for Downtown](#) 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, Brighton city manager. “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.”

Brighton has put the plan into action by adopting 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.

Giffels Webster, founded in 1952, is comprised of civil engineers, landscape architects, planners, GIS specialists and surveyors, who serve public, private and institutional clients throughout the United States with their community planning, infrastructure and land development needs. More at www.giffelswebster.com.

Brighton is a city in Livingston County with a population of 7,600 in its 3.7 square miles.

<https://www.techcentury.com/2019/04/15/american-planning-association-star-division-honors-brighton-comprehensive-plan/>