

Sign Research Foundation 2019-2020 Research Grant

Project Title: Case Studies of Amortization in 50 States

Problem Statement

The amortization of signs brings up issues involving the First and Fifth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, making it vitally important that communities and end users understand their rights and responsibilities under this topic. Sign companies have little specific knowledge of the state legislative history and court precedents that affect amortization, takings, abandonment, and overall treatment of nonconformities.

Research Product

Around 2010, a think tank (Change Lab Solutions) developed a complete series of state-level reports on takings law and judicial precedent in order to analyze the likelihood of enacting local ordinances to discourage/prohibit fast-food restaurants. While that public health mission is different than the interests of the sign industry, much of that work was applicable to sign ordinance work. However, those reports are nearly 10 years old and do not incorporate any recent judicial or legislative developments. This product should be a compilation of amortization, takings, treatment of nonconformities, and abandonment of uses in 50 states and DC including the Change Lab information update from 2010 to 2015 with a focus on sign specific subjects and owned by SRF. A successful study would also answer the following questions:

1. How many states have the right to require businesses to take down their non-conforming signs after a new sign code is adopted?
2. If so, what sort of time frames and compensation should be required?
3. What are best practices for the requiring the removal of nonconforming signs if they have been abandoned, destroyed, or substantially damaged?

Target Audience

State and local officials, land use attorneys, appraisers, permitters, real estate managers, end users, and sign companies

Grant Amount

\$5,000, which includes travel/accommodations to present at one conference

PROPOSALS MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

Lead Researcher:

Job Title:

University/Organization/Affiliation:

Address:

Email:

Phone:

Date:

Additional Researchers:

Scope of Research (describe your methodology, process, literature review):

Project Timeline with Deliverables

Task/Deliverable	Months													
	1 Jan	2 Feb	3 Mar	4 Apr	5 May	6 Jun	7 Jul	8 Aug	9 Sep	10 Oct	11 Nov	12 Dec	13 Jan	14 Feb
Task 1														
Task 2														
Task 3														
Task 4														
Task 5														
Task 6 Submission of draft report														
Task 7 Submission of final draft with the incorporation of edits from advisory council. This includes preparation of all presentation/webinar materials.														

Project Milestones and Payment

The following schedule identifies target dates for completions of task. If changes to the schedule are necessary, the lead researcher will contact SRF to discuss their impact.

Milestone	Due Date	Payment
Task 1 –		
Task 2 –		
Task 3 -		
Task 4 -		
Task 5 -		
Task 6 –		
Task 7 –		
Travel & Presentation at conference TBD		
TOTAL		