

Legal Alert

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U.S. Supreme Court Decision Will Impact Sign Ordinances Across the Valley - *Reed v. Town of Gilbert, Arizona*

The U.S. Supreme court issued a unanimous opinion on June 18, 2015 in the case of *Reed v. Town of Gilbert, Arizona* that invalidated certain provisions of the town's sign code and will have far reaching implications for municipal sign codes across the country. Gilbert's sign code imposed different restrictions on various types of temporary signs based on the content of the sign. A political sign that says "Grady Gammage for President" is subjected to one regulatory scheme, an ideological sign that says "Go Suns!" is subjected to another, and, as with the plaintiff in the case, Good News Community Church, a directional sign advertising church services is subjected to yet another. The Supreme Court decisively ruled that it is an offense of the First Amendment to impose regulations based on the content of the signs, and that such restrictions are unconstitutional and must undergo the highest level of judicial scrutiny.

The practical impact is yet to be fully understood, but municipalities around Arizona and the Country will devote significant hours over the next year evaluating and amending their sign codes. In Arizona, the state legislature presumably will also be required to reevaluate state statutes that establishes specific criteria for political signs (and only political signs).

The Arizona Planning Association is hosting a roundtable discussion regarding *Reed v. Town of Gilbert* on **August 7 at the Maricopa County Flood Control District** to provide municipal officials and industry consultants an opportunity to talk through the various implications of the decision. Gammage & Burnham partner Cameron Artigue will be on hand as a roundtable participant to facilitate discussion. More information will be posted as the event date nears.

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