

**ORDINANCE NO. 2024-03**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF RICHLAND, WASHINGTON,  
AMENDING RICHLAND MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 27.08.040  
RELATED TO FREESTANDING SIGNS.**

**WHEREAS**, the City has need, from time to time, to amend the Richland Municipal Code (RMC) to bring it into alignment with best practices; and

**WHEREAS**, the Richland School District submitted an application to the City of Richland seeking to amend Richland Municipal Code Section 27.08.040 to expand its applicability; and

**WHEREAS**, Richland’s Sign Code, codified as Chapter 22.08 RMC, contains special provisions for high school and college campuses but does not address elementary or middle school campuses; and

**WHEREAS**, the distinction between primary and secondary educational facilities in the City’s Sign Code is arbitrary given that the facilities do not substantially differ in terms of the public’s informational and locational needs and expectations; and

**WHEREAS**, on January 24, 2024, the Richland Planning Commission held a public hearing on the proposed amendment, after which it voted to recommend approval of the proposed amendment to Richland City Council.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED** by the City of Richland as follows:

Section 1. Section 27.08.040 of the Richland Municipal Code, entitled Special provisions, as first enacted by Ordinance No. 3-89, and last amended by Ordinance No. 08-19, is hereby amended to read as follows:

**27.08.040 Special provisions.**

The following special provisions are provided to address situations posing unique signage requirements:

A. Signs Subject to Approval by the Planning Commission. The following signs may be approved by the planning commission, provided they meet the criteria listed, unless waived by the commission:

1. Freestanding, off-premises signs located at the entrance to a business center will be allowed if the following criteria exist:

- a. When the businesses do not have adequate ability to allow their patrons to see their business location by using allowable signage in this chapter.
- b. Permission to locate the sign has been given, in writing, by the property owner where the sign is to be located.
- c. The sign meets the structural requirements of the Uniform Sign Code.

- d. The sign may be lighted.
- e. Letters may not be greater than eight inches in height.
- f. The sign must be made of a durable material.
- g. The sign must not exceed 15 feet in height.
- h. The sign may not exceed 45 square feet.
- i. The sign may be double faced.
- j. The sign must not be located in a residential zone.

2. Freestanding signs on ~~high~~ school district campuses or college campuses may be allowed in addition to those signs permitted under Table 27.10.020(A), subject to the following criteria:

- a. Only one sign, not exceeding 64 square feet in area, may be permitted.
- b. The sign shall not exceed 20 feet in height.
- c. The sign shall meet minimum building setback requirements so that it will not obstruct either pedestrian or automobile traffic.
- d. The sign shall be oriented so that it does not directly face adjacent residential properties.
- e. If the sign contains an electronic reader board or is otherwise illuminated, all lighting shall be turned off between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.
- f. Notice of the public meeting held to review an application for a freestanding sign shall be provided through posting of the site at the proposed sign location.

B. Signs Subject to Approval by the City Manager or Designee. Signs may be approved by the city manager or designee subject to the criteria set forth herein:

1. One freestanding sign within 500 feet of an entrance to a business center may be allowed, subject to the following criteria:

- a. The sign shall be located within 500 feet of an entrance into the business center or shall be located on a property that is included within the business center.
- b. The sign is located within a C-2, C-3, or B-C zoning district.
- c. Permission to locate the sign has been given to the sign permit applicant, in writing, from the property owner where the sign is to be located.
- d. If the business center is five acres in area, or less, or contains less than 100,000 square feet of gross floor area of retail business uses, the maximum sign size permitted under this section is 150 square feet and the maximum sign height is 25 feet. If the business center totals more than five acres, and contains more than 100,000 square feet of gross floor area of retail business uses, the maximum sign size is 240 square feet and the maximum sign height is 40 feet. If the business center totals 40 acres or more, and contains more than 200,000 square feet of gross

floor area of retail business uses, the maximum sign size is 350 square feet and the maximum sign height is 50 feet.

e. The sign may double its otherwise allowable size in square feet when located on the freeway side of a line 350 feet from and parallel to the interchange right-of-way. The interchange right-of-way shall begin at a point along the freeway 1,500 feet from the center of the street passing over and under the freeway. Signs constructed pursuant to the provisions of this subsection may be constructed to 80 feet in height; provided, that any sign must be located more than 300 feet from a single-family residential zoning district (R-1 or R-2); and further provided, that any sign increased in size as provided by this section shall not be eligible for further sign size increases as provided for in RMC 27.08.030(E)(1)(b).

f. The sign shall be nonilluminated or internally illuminated only and shall not include any electronic readerboards or flashing signs.

g. The maximum size of a sign issued under this section shall be determined as follows:

i. Fifty square feet shall be allotted for each business in the business center plus 50 square feet, but in no case shall a sign exceed the size limitations identified in subsection (B)(1)(d) of this section. Signs issued under this subsection that may double in size by virtue of their proximity to a grade separated interchange as specified in subsection (B)(1)(e) of this section may allot 100 square feet for each business in the business center plus 100 square feet.

h. No portion of a sign shall exceed 100 square feet in area or 200 square feet in area if the sign meets the criteria contained in subsection (B)(1)(e) of this section. No portion of a sign shall be less than 10 percent of the total sign area as determined in subsection (B)(1)(g) of this section.

i. A business center that totals less than five acres in area shall be permitted a maximum of one sign, either on- or off-premises. Business centers five acres and larger but less than 40 acres shall be permitted a maximum of two signs, but only one such sign shall be off-premises. Business centers 40 acres or larger shall be permitted a maximum of three signs, but only one such sign shall be off-premises.

j. A business located in a business center that has erected a sign under this section shall not be allowed additional freestanding signs on the same street or highway frontage that the sign is located on.

k. Freestanding signs issued under this section must be separated from other freestanding signs on the same frontage by a horizontal distance of at least twice the total height of the two signs.

l. Applicants for a business center sign shall submit an application that identifies all of the properties that are to be included within a proposed business center and shall identify the size, location and number of all proposed signs. Additionally, an agreement signed by all property owners included within the proposed business center shall accompany said application for a proposed sign. The agreement shall specify that the property owners:

i. Agree to be included within the proposed business center;

- ii. Agree to the boundaries of the proposed business center. Business centers shall consist of properties that are adjacent to or abutting each other (properties that are separated only by a public right-of-way are considered to be adjacent to each other for the purposes of this section);
- iii. Agree to the proposed name of the business center;
- iv. Agree to the number and locations of all proposed signs; and
- v. Provide for an entity which shall be responsible for determining how maintenance of the signs will be provided.

Said agreement shall be signed and recorded and shall be binding upon the current and future owners of the property within the proposed business center.

2. Portable signs located immediately in front of a business will be allowed when the following criteria are met:

- a. No such sign will be allowed on city right-of-way or real property; provided, however, that such signs are allowed in the parkway and uptown overlay districts.
- b. The sign is up only during business hours.
- c. The sign is placed in such a manner that it is at least four feet from the building and two feet from the curb.
- d. The sign is placed at least three feet to the right or the left of the entrance to the building or eight feet from the building face.
- e. No portion of any portable sign shall be closer than 10 feet to another portable sign.
- f. The sign will be placed in the same location each time and anchored in such a manner as it meets the criteria set forth in the Uniform Sign Code.
- g. The sign will meet the structural criteria set forth in the Uniform Sign Code.
- h. The sign must not exceed five feet in height.
- i. The sign must not exceed 12 square feet.
- j. Only one such sign will be allowed per business.
- k. The sign must be made of a durable material and be maintained according to this code.

3. Banners may be erected over city streets when the following criteria are met:

- a. Banners shall generally be made of nondurable material.
- b. Banners will be allowed over city streets only in preselected locations approved by the city manager or designee.
- c. Banners must meet a general physical condition approval of the administrator.

- d. Duration of exhibiting a banner is limited to one week.
- e. Any banner over a city street must be a minimum of 16 feet from the street surface.
- f. Any banner must be for a noncommercial use or purpose.

4. Streetside banners will be allowed when the following criteria are met:

- a. Generally pole-mounted banners shall be made of nondurable material such as woven fabric or approved plastic material.
- b. Streetside banners shall only be displayed for as long as the banners remain in good condition. Banners that are weathered beyond their intended use, as determined by the city manager or designee, shall be removed or replaced.
- c. Duration of exhibiting a streetside banner is limited to one week.
- d. Any banner on a pedestrian right-of-way must be a minimum of eight feet from the sidewalk surface.
- e. The banner must meet all safety standards and codes for both pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
- f. The decision as to the size, location, and physical conditions of streetside banners will be that of the city manager or designee.
- g. Streetside banners shall be located only on the following designated street sections:
  - i. Columbia Center Boulevard from Columbia Park Trail south to city limits;
  - ii. Columbia Park Trail from east city limits to SR 240 overpass and from Queensgate Drive to Malibu Private Road;
  - iii. Columbia Point Drive;
  - iv. Duportail Street from Queensgate Drive to Keene Road;
  - v. Fowler Street from east city limits to Georgia Avenue;
  - vi. Gage Boulevard from east city limits to Keene Road;
  - vii. George Washington Way from I-182 to McMurray Street;
  - viii. Jadwin Avenue from George Washington Way to Stevens Drive;
  - ix. Keene Road, from approximately 1,200 feet east of Queensgate Boulevard to approximately 600 feet west of Queensgate Boulevard;
  - x. Kennedy Road between Duportail Street and west city limits;
  - xi. Lee Boulevard from Howard Amon Park to Thayer Drive;
  - xii. Leslie Road from Gage Boulevard to the abandoned railroad right-of-way;

- xiii. Queensgate Drive from Keene Road to Truman Avenue;
- xiv. Spaulding Avenue from Columbia Park Trail to Fowler Street;
- xv. Sprout Street;
- xvi. Stevens Drive between Lee Boulevard and Williams Boulevard and between the bypass highway and Horn Rapids Road;
- xvii. Swift Boulevard from George Washington Way to Long Avenue;
- xviii. Symons Street from George Washington Way to Jadwin Avenue;
- xix. Tapteal Drive from Steptoe Street to Columbia Center Boulevard;
- xx. Torbett Street from George Washington Way to Jadwin Avenue;
- xxi. Truman Avenue;
- xxii. Van Giesen Street from George Washington Way to Jadwin Avenue; and between Alder Avenue and Wright Avenue;
- xxiii. Wellsian Way from Aaron Drive to Lee Boulevard; and
- xxiv. Williams Boulevard from George Washington Way to Jadwin Avenue;
- xxv. Streetside banners may also be permitted on street sections in addition to those included in the above list, if such street section(s) is the determination of the city manager or designee that the street section is primarily located in an area that abuts commercial land uses.

5. Streetside signs will be allowed when the following criteria are met:

- a. Signs shall be of durable construction.
- b. Duration of exhibiting a streetside sign is limited to one week.
- c. Any streetside sign extending over a pedestrian right-of-way must be a minimum of eight feet from the sidewalk surface.
- d. Any sign of this nature which extends over a vehicular right-of-way must be a minimum of 16 feet above the roadway surface.
- e. All signs must meet public safety standards and codes.
- f. The decision as to the size, location and physical conditions of streetside signs will be that of the sign code administrator.

Section 2. This Ordinance shall take effect the day following its publication in the official newspaper of the City of Richland.

Section 3. Should any section or provision of this Ordinance be declared by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, that decision shall not affect the validity of the Ordinance as a whole or any part thereof, other than the part so declared to be invalid.

Section 4. The City Clerk and the codifiers of this Ordinance are authorized to make necessary corrections to this Ordinance, including but not limited to the correction of scrivener's errors/clerical errors, section numbering, references, or similar mistakes of form.

**PASSED** by the City Council of the City of Richland, Washington, at a regular meeting on the 5<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2024.




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Theresa Richardson, Mayor

Attest:

  
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Jennifer Rogers, City Clerk

Approved as to Form:

  
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Heather Kintzley, City Attorney

First Reading: February 20, 2024

Second Reading: March 5, 2024

Date Published: March 10, 2024