

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-07

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 485 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF RICHLAND CENTER TO AUTHORIZE ELECTRONIC MESSAGE CENTER SIGNS ON PUBLIC PROPERTY

The Common Council of the City of Richland Center, Wisconsin, does ordain as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 485 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Richland Center is hereby amended by adding a new subsection § 485.04(14) to read as follows:

(14) ELECTRONIC MESSAGE CENTER SIGNS ON PUBLIC PROPERTY.

One (1) electronic message center sign, as defined in § 485.03(26), shall be permitted on any lot in any zoning district that is owned by the City of Richland Center, Richland County, the State of Wisconsin, the United States, a school district, or a public library, and used for a governmental or public purpose, subject to the following:

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Chapter, a sign authorized under this subsection shall be exempt from the zoning permit requirements of § 485.04(3). All other applicable provisions of this Chapter, including construction specifications under § 485.08 and administration and enforcement under § 485.09, shall continue to apply.

(b) The aggregate sign area, including any nameplate or identification signage incorporated into the same structure, shall not exceed seventy-five (75) square feet per surface, with no more than two (2) surfaces.

(c) Maximum sign height shall not exceed twelve (12) feet above grade.

(d) The electronic message portion shall display static messages only. Scrolling, animation, video, dissolve, fade, and flashing effects are prohibited.

(e) Each message shall remain static for a minimum of eight (8) seconds. Transitions between messages shall be instantaneous.

(f) The sign shall be equipped with an automatic photocell dimmer. Maximum luminance shall not exceed 5,000 nits between sunrise and sunset and 500 nits between sunset and sunrise, measured at the sign face.

(g) In the event of malfunction, the sign shall default to a static display or turn off entirely; no error patterns, test patterns, or scrolling error messages shall be visible from any public right-of-way.

(h) When the sign is located in a residential zoning district, the electronic message portion shall not operate between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.

(i) No electronic message center sign shall be located within fifty (50) feet of a residential dwelling on an adjoining lot, measured from the nearest point of the sign structure to the nearest wall of the dwelling.

(j) EXISTING SIGNS. Any electronic message center sign on public property that was in place as of the effective date of this subsection but that does not fully conform to the standards of

paragraphs (b) through (i) shall be deemed a legal nonconforming sign as of that date, and § 485.07 shall govern its continued operation, maintenance, and replacement.

SECTION 2. SEVERABILITY. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or portion of this ordinance is for any reason held invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such portion shall be deemed a separate, distinct, and independent provision and such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions hereof.

SECTION 3. EFFECTIVE DATE. This ordinance shall take effect upon its passage and publication as required by law.

ADOPTED by the Common Council of the City of Richland Center, Wisconsin on this 18th day of August, 2026 by the following vote: AYES _____, NOS _____, Abstain/Absent _____.

**CITY OF RICHLAND CENTER
RICHLAND COUNTY, WISCONSIN**

ATTEST:

Karin Tepley, Mayor

Amanda Keller, City Clerk

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