

LAKE TOWNSHIP, ROSCOMMON COUNTY, MICHIGAN
OFFICIAL PUBLIC EXPLANATION – REFERENDUM ON ORDINANCE NO. 55D

At its October 22, 2025 meeting, the Lake Township Board adopted Ordinance No. 55D, which amended Sections 302 and 302E of the Lake Township Zoning Ordinance to reduce the minimum required road right-of-way setback for residential structures from 20 feet to 10 feet in the R-1 Waterfront Residential District and the RR-1, R-2 and R-3 Off-Water Residential Districts, and Agricultural District. This ordinance changes how close homes, garages, and other buildings may be constructed to the road.

Arguments for Maintaining the 20-Foot Setback

A 20-foot setback offers several community benefits:

- Improved safety: Greater distance from the roadway allows better visibility for drivers and pedestrians, particularly in areas without sidewalks or shoulders.
- Clear sight lines: Wider setbacks improve visibility at driveways and intersections, reducing the likelihood of accidents.
- Enhanced aesthetics: Consistent spacing contributes to the visual harmony of residential streets and maintains the community's rural character.
- Environmental and practical protection: More space provides room for snow storage, drainage, and vegetation, important in northern rural areas where snow plowing and drifting are significant concerns.
- Public utility access: Adequate setback space allows easier maintenance and repair of underground and overhead utilities.
- Community character: Uniform setbacks help preserve the established look and feel of neighborhoods by maintaining consistent street frontages.

Arguments in Favor of the 10-Foot Setback

Those who support the reduced 10-foot setback say it gives property owners greater flexibility in designing and locating homes, garages, and additions on smaller lots, making more use of limited building space.